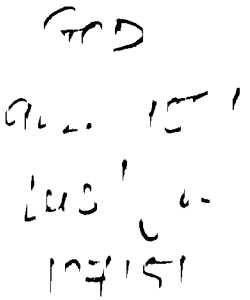
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A

GREAT COUNTRY'S LITTLE WARS;

OR,

ENGLAND, AFFGHANISTAN,

AND

SINDE;

107151

BEING

A SKETCH, WITH REFERENCE TO THEIR MORALITY AND POLICY, OF RECENT TRANSACTIONS ON THE NORTH-WESTERN FRONTIER OF INDIA.

BY HENRY LUSHINGTON.

LONDON:
JOHN W. PARKER, WEST STRAND.

M.DCCC.XLIV

LONDON:
HARRISON AND CO., PRINTERS,
ST. MARTIN'S LANE.

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INTRODUCTORY CHAPTER.

THE following pages, from 17 to 168, consist principally of the reprint of two Articles on the invasion of Affghanistan, which were respectively inserted in a periodical work in the months of May and July, 1843. In compliance with some opinions which seemed entitled to attention, they are now offered to the public in a separate form.

With the exception of some slight additions to the historical sketch of our proceedings in Affghanistan, they are printed nearly as they originally appeared: a circumstance which is mentioned to account, for the convenient reviewing plural which might otherwise be unexpected in the pages of a little book with a name in the title-page. No material alterations have been made in these chapters; nothing having appeared during the last year calculated to shake the author's impression of the facts to which he has referred, or to modify the opinions he has expressed. The two chapters on Sinde have been recently written, and are now printed for the first time.

The striking and terrible events which marked the winter of 1841, and led to the termination of

our Affghan dominion, excited in a large number of persons a feeling of strong but mere curiosity respecting the military details and personal adventures connected with our calamity. This curiosity, in its nature transient, was largely fed and soon satisfied by works whose circulation in a few weeks entered upon the seventh thousand, and probably has not since overpast that limit. It was the interest of the crowd in the topic of the day, the anxiety for news—above all for excitement, felt by the fashionable and reading public. Another kind of anxiety was felt by men to whom it was not indifferent whether all that had been done so ineffectually, so disastrously, had been also done wickedly and wrongly; men who cared to know whether the forward step, for the first time retracted by England, was to be considered henceforth as a misfortune, or as morally and politically criminal. It was for all who share this feeling that the following pages were written, and to them they are now offered as an attempt to illustrate the origin and progress of our "little wars;" as exhibiting, in a chapter of recent Indian history, too many specimens of what the conduct of a great country ought *not* to be.

We cannot undo the past; but a clear and just judgment on the past is the best and only preparation against the difficulties of the future; difficulties which seem to come nearer to us with every month's

dispatches from India. The Affghan war indeed is over. Sinde, whether by wrong or by stern necessity, is ours, unless the deadly climate wrest from us the land which the Beloochees so bravely though in vain defended; but there are yet chiefs with whom peace will be troublesome and quarrel easy; there are yet states to tempt us with weakness, and provoke us with perversities; and a great army ready to act lies on the frontier of the coveted and disorganized Punjaub. It is impossible justly to anticipate events whether in the way of censure or praise; nor is it desirable to lay down for our course in India any definite rule of abstinence from future acquisition. Such rules have been laid down before now, and have not recommended themselves by their peculiar efficiency. Acquisition of additional dominion may be right or may be wrong; every case when it arises should be considered on its own grounds, and judged on its merits. But the rulers of India have a claim to know what it is which their country requires of them; whether to do what is right, or, *per fas aut nefas*, to extend her dominion. At present, is it unfair to say? the country requires—neither.

Let a Governor-general go out, intending on the whole to do his duty towards India as well as towards England, with no extraordinary inclination for profitable injustice, it is scarcely possible that

the indifference of the Home Legislature—of all but a few individual members of Parliament—should not tend to relax the strictness of his morality. If such a man, wavering on some critical occasion between an inner consciousness of right, and plausible reasons for expedient wrong, should fall back for guidance upon that which must always strongly influence even the strongest mind, his country's probable judgment on his conduct—what parallel and recent case will occur foremost to his mind? He has seen the invasion of Affghanistan, considered, it may be, by himself as unjust; known by all to have been disastrous; yet passing unexamined, uncensured, except by individuals. He has seen men who agree in nothing else,—men who never voted with the Whigs, and men who never voted with the Tories,—men to whom a grant for Maynooth is an abomination, and men to whom church-rates are tyranny,—men who can hardly discuss the appointment of a constable without finding or making a cause of party quarrel, combining to evade the responsibility of a decision as to the justice or injustice of an Asiatic war.

The most genuine feeling called out by Indian debates, involving the conduct of great public servants, appears to be this:—a sense of shocked decorum, of personal discourtesy. "A grievous injustice," says some "petulant," that is, earnest

accuser, "has been committed; examine for yourselves and see." Forthwith, member after member rises, Government and opposition alike,—all forward to bear their "humble testimony to the high worth of that noble lord, and the incompatibility of the conduct attributed to him with that character, for which, *though his political opponents*, they are proud and happy to take this opportunity of expressing"—all the sentiments which, on this occasion, are *not* to the purpose. The end is—"He is incapable of such actions, and, therefore, we will not examine."

This defence, so effective on Indian affairs,—why is it confined to them only? When the late Government were charged with recklessly staking the finances of the Nation against their own continuance in office, why was not an indignant and sufficient refutation deduced from a list of Lord John Russell's private virtues? Why was not the question of the Dublin Jury List fought out on the broad ground of Sir Robert Peel's irreproachable character? Because, perhaps, in these questions both sides were in earnest.

All things are capable of some defence, and the imaginary case in question may be capable of many, but *this* form of defence ought once for all to be protested against, and finally ejected from Parliament. It is a venerable principle of the British

Constitution, known to every member who is also a magistrate, dinned at every assizes by every judge into the ears of every jury, that an otherwise proved charge is not to be rebutted by the best of characters.

But let the praise of a Statesman's personal character be as well deserved as it is vaguely and thoughtlessly bestowed, the defence inferred from it rests upon the general but transparent error, that a good man in private life is incapable of injustice as a ruler. A man may be good and amiable towards Englishmen, and yet unjust towards Affghans and Beloochees. The influences by which he is more closely surrounded,—habit, prejudice, interest, tend to keep him generally right in the one case; in the other they may, and often do, tend to lead him directly wrong. His position requires not only readiness to fulfil his duties, but something of enlarged intellect and sympathies to apprehend them. We meet with many more models of private than of public virtue. Perhaps no man ever passed through life in an elevated station without grave and noticeable errors in his public conduct. Why is this? Because the discernment of right is more difficult, and the temptation to wrong more unchecked and stronger. Lord Auckland, then, and his advisers may have been, individually and collectively, the most amiable men who ever gave or

attended a ball at the Government House in Calcutta. This is no answer to the charge that they perpetrated in Sinde and Affghanistan aggressions as unjust as were ever perpetrated by a government in India.

In the recent debate on Sinde (February 9th, 1844,) Sir J. Hobhouse, in a speech which, being lively and personal, appears to have been considered by many an effective answer to the argumentative statement of Mr. Roebuck, made use of one peculiar and most remarkable expression. Mr. Roebuck had, he complained, almost "sprinkled himself and Lord Auckland with the blood" shed in the Affghan war. To what particular terms in Mr. Roebuck's speech the reference is made, does not appear in the report; but the complaint can only imply that Mr. Roebuck had charged, perhaps in strong terms, the guilt of blood shed in a war believed and asserted by him to be causeless and unjust, upon those who caused or authorised the war. Upon whom else should he charge it? Are not the commencers of a war guilty or innocent of the consequent bloodshed, as the war itself is wrongfully or rightfully undertaken? Yet a minister feels it to be strange and discourteous that this blood should be "sprinkled" upon him, and protests, as an injured man, against the plain-speaking of his accuser. The blood was shed far off,—his

hands were never stained with it,—why should it be required at his hands?

Sir J. Hobhouse (who stands on this occasion in the place of the late Indian Government) looks at the question from the wrong side, and applies to his own case the defence volunteered by so many for Lord Auckland. He would throw off all uneasiness about the war, because his conscience truly tells him that he is not indifferent to bloodshed. But that is not the question. No one charges him with that; the charge is that the war was unjust. Impolicy, error, want of judgment,—these are calm terms which trouble and shock no one; but the charge of shedding blood without just cause, is felt at once to be no trifle. Let it be felt so more and more. If commendation of the wisdom and forethought which originated the Affghan war were in question, there would be no want of readiness to claim the praise of the design,—

Me, me, adsum qui feci,

would be the exclamation of many. Let those who would accept the praise,—those, indeed, who have grasped at and worn—and with no lack of pride—the laurel of victory, accept and meet the attack upon the injustice which caused the quarrel.

In me convertite ferrum.—

Let them finish the line, for they *are* responsible. And let them not think it is in discourtesy only, or

in faction, that they are charged with unjust bloodshedding by those who deliberately believe that the invasion of Affghanistan was a deed which every additional fact, every attempted defence, strips more and more utterly bare of every shadow of justification.

I leave it to the jurists of the *Portfolio* to maintain, that all the officers and men who took part in the Affghan war, are, by the law of England, individually indictable at the bar of the Old Bailey for murder; and to denounce the conduct of the directors of our foreign relations as explicable only on the supposition of treason. While the statesmen of a free country share the feelings of those whose consent or will placed them where they are, there will be more probable and easier explanations nearer at hand; all, perhaps, essentially included in the statement of a distinguished ornament of the Lower House:—"The British nation does not care a bit about foreign affairs. It does not care *two-pence.*"

True, but surely not right. Foreign affairs are the affairs of the rest of the world, and the British nation has a good deal to do, directly or indirectly, with the rest of the world. Englishmen live in every climate; the ships of England are on every sea—

> She moving—at her girdle clash
> The golden keys of East and West.

A few words written in the Cabinet of England

are like the sudden removal of a tiny bolt, setting free the complex forces of a great engine. The vast machinery of Oriental war stirs and works; armies march, artillery rolls, lands are wasted, cities are stormed, the thrones of Asia go down, half the human race is shaken with alarm. And for all this—the nation does not care. It must learn to care, if it would keep the right to be proud of its empire. It must learn to care, or it may find that even carelessness is not exempt from the penalties of wrong-doing. It must learn to care, if it would not have the charges of injustice and tyranny, which it zealously throws in the teeth of Russia and France, flung back on itself with the added brand of hypocrisy.

Those who care to discuss any particular case of acquisition by a civilized from an uncivilized power, generally divide themselves into two classes of arguers. There are many trained in the school of Exeter Hall, who find it easier to be benevolent than just, to denounce than to examine; and with them any advance made by a powerful state is at once set down as criminal; "All acquisitions are unjust; this is an acquisition, therefore this is unjust:" such is the staple of their argument; and it is one which, coupled with some affecting details of the sufferings in the particular case, at once gratifies its supporters with the sweet excitement of their

own philanthropy, and furnishes weapons to their opponents. It plays into their hands; it saves them the necessity of defending the particular act in question; it suggests generalities, with which to meet general denunciations. The charge is confessed and avoided. "All acquisitions are unjust, you say," is the answer: "be it so; this then is like others, and no worse than others. Why waste virtuous time in denouncing it? We respect your benevolence, we appreciate your intentions, but we know that while men are men, the stronger will gain on the weaker. These things are regulated by an '*uncontrollable principle*.' It always was so, it always will be so." And there the matter rests, having indeed reached the farthest point to which this argument can conduct it. The result is not satisfactory.

One who, though ready to join in censure of many acts, does not willingly allow that our Indian empire is one great edifice of wrong,—one who would willingly hope that the historical conduct of England may be distinguished from that of Russia, must deny the assumption that all acquisitions are unjust, and must wish that the denouncers of any act of oppression would attempt to show that the course pursued in this particular case has been inconsistent with some acknowledged principles of right. This line of argument is more troublesome than the other; but it has the direct advantage of

being infinitely more effective if successful; and the collateral advantage of being the only course consistent with truth and reason. It is the course which I have attempted to pursue in my remarks on the origin of the Affghan war, and on our successive steps of aggression in Sinde.

It is to Sir Robert Peel that we owe, along with much excellent morality, this convenient silencer of inconvenient inquiries; the doctrine of "an uncontrollable principle" necessitating the encroachments of civilized upon uncivilized nations. It would be discourteous to assume that the Premier meant nothing, and impossible to believe, as some have suggested, that Sir Robert Peel meant to elevate into a principle the mere selfish desire of gain. Let us try to assign to the words of so high an authority at least a plausible meaning.

In the position of a powerful and a weak state bound, whether by treaties or otherwise, to the observance of mutual rights, which there is no third party to enforce, there is perhaps an inherent difficulty. In the first place, the stronger party can never be punished for the violation of its engagements or duties. This difficulty, however, it rests with the stronger to avoid, by the simple process of keeping its engagements. Next, the weaker party, being also by supposition the lower in civilization and morals, is likely enough to give offence; and in

every case of offence or even of dispute, the offended and stronger party is also the judge, and as a supreme tribunal without appeal, carries into effect the judgment demanded by its own sense of its own claims. This *is*, and must be—perhaps for thousands of years. Between two parties each confident of right, where there is no other arbiter, strength will decide; and English civilization is stronger than Asiatic barbarism.

Let all this be granted, and what follows? The chance, or even certainty of provocation, the partiality of men in their own case, the absence of an arbiter—are all these things, ten times multiplied, "an uncontrollable principle," making useless the search after right, and so justifying indifference to wrong? They constitute at most a tendency, which the simplest rules of duty order us to watch and control. They are a difficulty making strait the way to right; but they do not make the wrong way right—they do not meet one single objection to any one action or series of actions. A nation must act on its own sense of its own claims, and may be in error respecting them; is it therefore released from the obligation of seeking out the just course, from the responsibility of choosing the wrong one? Is it therefore to make its own interests the single measure of its claims? This is an inference which it requires some power of logic, as well as of conscience, to draw.

It amounts to saying, that because men are partial in their own cause they need not try to be impartial; that because men may be misled by their passions in estimating their own rights, therefore there is no essential right or wrong; that where among men there is no judge, there, too, there is no idea of justice. Conclusions as deadly as they are false, striking at the very root of morality.

It is the sense of right, the desire of justice, which has set up the judge among men. The same sense, and the same desire, exist even where the judge has not yet appeared; not less in the disputes of nations than in the farthest back woods of Canada: and their existence is a prophecy that he will yet be found. Meanwhile, and until the nations find him—a great but conceivable discovery, which distant and peaceful centuries have perhaps in store—let us not dispute the reality of that justice, which is at least already divine, and may become human, and which every one profoundly respects so long as he considers it on his own side. Passion and interest may dim our eyes, but that is no reason why we should deliberately bandage them with "an uncontrollable principle." We may be shortsighted; but we are not quite blind. No uncontrollable principle necessitates an attack on the unoffending; no uncontrollable principle necessitates the breach of solemn engagements.

Seeing that Christianity has only existed about *two* thousand years in the world, it would be too much to require that the powerful should be generous, where they cannot be sure that they are impartial. But, at any rate, there are some few broad and older rules, applicable to the dealings of nations, as well as of individuals. "Thou shalt not steal;" "Thou shalt not bear false witness," are among the number. By these we are ready enough to try the conduct of others—by these, let us try our own; and we may perhaps be helped towards a practical conclusion by laying down an axiom co-extensive with the free will of man, that there is no such thing as a principle at once *wrong* and *uncontrollable.*

WHY WAS AFFGHANISTAN INVADED?

> The abuse of greatness is when it disjoins
> Remorse from power.

"We are now indebted for advice and censure to gentlemen, who, till our measures forced it upon their knowledge, had never heard the name of Herat, and did not know Cabool from Candahar."

To something like this effect spoke Lord Palmerston, when vindicating the Eastern policy of the late Government, in one of the earlier debates on the subject. Whatever more or less direct bearing this piece of satire may have upon the merits of Lord Palmerston and his colleagues, they are entitled to its full benefit; for it is true. It would have been well for England, for India, for Affghanistan, and perhaps for Lord Palmerston himself, if the assertion had been less true.

Five or six years since, the degree of information possessed by the educated portion of society generally, was little more than that above attributed to members of the House of Commons. We had a general idea that Affghanistan was a mountainous country, and that it lay somewhere between India and Persia; we had heard the names of Cabool, Candahar, and Ghuznee; and we attached some meaning, very slightly connected with latitude and longitude, to the mention of Herat. Our political conceptions were equally vague with our geographi-

cal. We had two or three names of persons, which we fitted with varying degrees of incorrectness to the two or three names of places above-mentioned; we believed that Dost Mahomed held in Affghanistan some kind of supremacy from which Shah Soojah had been deposed, and stood in some relation or other, of friendship or hostility, towards Prince Kamram of Herat, whose name was at that time rather the most familiar of the three. We connected these names in different combinations with an indefinite fear of danger to our Indian empire. We heard much of the influence of Russia at the Court of Persia, of her intrigues in Central Asia, of her emissaries and stirrers-up of discontent in India; and our most fixed was our most well-founded idea, that Russia, whether dealing with Circassians, Persians, or Affghans, was neither moderate in her wishes nor scrupulous in her choice of means, that she cared less than nothing for our interests, nothing for those of general humanity, and much for her own. Such in the early part of 1837 was, upon these subjects, the amount of the public knowledge, and the disposition of the public mind.

At length there arrived intelligence of a definite and important event; the attack of the Persians upon Herat, with the countenance and aid of Russian officers, and in defiance of the remonstrances of the representative of England. The danger apprehended from the west, seemed to have taken the first step in advance towards our frontier; and we began to look with some interest at the map of Cen-

tral Asia. The cause of the besiegers was the cause of Russia, the cause of the besieged was the cause of England; and we heard with satisfaction and pride, of the degree in which the skill and resolution of an English lieutenant had contributed to the determined and ultimately triumphant resistance of the besieged. It seemed not impossible that the two great powers, from the indirect struggle of diplomacy and encouragement of antagonist interests, might pass into direct collision. Suddenly we heard that we were at war—with Russia? No,—with the existing rulers of Affghanistan. An Anglo-Indian force of 20,000 men was about to cross the Indus, with the object of deposing Dost Mahomed and his brothers of Candahar, and reinstating Shah Soojah on the throne of Cabool. The declaration of October 1st, 1838, announced to the world at once the intention of the Governor-general, and the grounds on which he proceeded.

It was natural that most readers of this document should take for granted that this statement of facts, at least, was well-founded; it was natural, too, though less excusable, to receive the announcement of such a step with some tendency towards acquiescence; to believe that no English minister would recommend, no Governor-general would adopt, a measure so extraordinary, involving possibilities so tremendous, without the existence of strong grounds both of justice and policy. The intelligence of the commencement of the Affghan war was received by the public in accordance with these feelings, by

Parliament with that indifference to foreign affairs which characterizes the senate of the most commercial nation of the world. A few questions were asked and answered; papers were refused, produced, or to be produced hereafter; the foreign minister made bold assertions, the leader of opposition cautiously reserved his opinion, and the subject of Affghanistan slept at least until the arrival of the next mail from India. Then came the fall of Ghuznee, the flight of Dost Mahomed, the unopposed entrance of Shah Soojah into Cabool. The Affghan expedition had all the vindication it could derive from success; and that, for the time, was all it needed. We had successful generals to make into lords, successful diplomatists to make into baronets, a successful army to thank and praise; remonstrances on the score of impolicy were answered by the event; remonstrances on the score of injustice could get no hearing. The very ease with which Shah Soojah's restoration had been effected, *proved* that his rule was acceptable to the Affghans; in placing an effectual barrier between our own territories and Russian intrigue, we had bestowed upon them the inestimable benefit of a strong and settled, yet popular, government. We had replaced an oppressive and usurping ruler, by a legitimate and beloved monarch; we had opened a way to the extension of our commerce into vast and unknown regions. A war, undertaken on grounds, which had been, or should be proved, to be irrefragable, was over, in fact if not in name, and we had only to reap its benefits, and reward its instruments.

The latter was done forthwith, but it was soon apparent that the former might yet be delayed. Months passed on, and became years, and still every Indian mail brought intelligence of "disturbances" in Affghanistan. There were still "insurrections;" there were still "rebels" to put down; predatory tribes to be restrained, turbulent chieftains to be humbled. A war of detachments seemed to be spread over the country; there were no great battles; but there were "brilliant affairs," and "dashing exploits" without end, each of them costing many valuable lives; and our usual success was not unchequered with serious disasters. Even the surrender, in November, 1840, of Dost Mahomed, did not restore tranquillity to the country. It appears from a summary, drawn up in the *Bombay Times*, that between January, 1840, and August, 1841, our troops in Affghanistan and the neighbouring countries, were engaged in thirty-four distinct conflicts. The Affghans and Beloochees were slow to learn the benefits of the state of things we had introduced among them.

In the mean time, as much attention was bestowed upon the subject at home as could be expected. Parliament did not neglect its duty, as far as that duty was to be inferred from its ordinary practice. Masses of printed paper, bound in blue, were distributed to the members of the House of Commons, and partly read by some of them. The general result of the correspondence produced, was in favour of Lord Auckland's policy. The invasion,

if invasion it was to be called, of Affghanistan, appeared to have been recommended by some of the authorities, to whose opinions on all topics respecting these countries, most weight was attached; and the opinions of Sir Alexander Burnes to the contrary, his expressions in favour of Dost Mahomed, and even his statements of facts, militating against the views of the Government, were withdrawn from the notice of Parliament, by a system of careful *selection*, as Lord John Russell designates it,—omission, as it might be more accurately denominated. In short, a case was, to a certain extent, made out, and any one who chose to acquiesce in the policy of the Government, might point to the blue book as his reason for so doing. The Affghan war was not a party question, that is, it was a question upon which each individual member had still to form his opinion from his own researches, and upon his own responsibility; and, therefore, (the inference is a singular one, but so uniformly drawn that its soundness may be held to have been established inductively,) it excited little interest. Had the subsequent disasters occurred in the early part of the war, the case would doubtless have been otherwise. There would have been no triumph of our arms to dazzle the eyes of inquirers, and voices which were silenced by victory, would have been clamorous for an explanation of the causes of a war resulting in defeat. For the comparative tranquillity he enjoyed, Lord Palmerston was indebted less to the Blue Book than to the petard which blew open the gates

of Ghuznee. But, by the help of the one and the other, and the Whig Budget, and the pressure of more domestic matters, the Affghan war was acquiesced in. Months and years passed away, leaving Affghanistan still occupied by our army, and many began habitually to regard it as virtually a permanent addition to our empire. In the summer of 1841, Sir J. C. Hobhouse spoke exultingly of our extended dominion; Lord Palmerston of its perfect tranquillity; and hardly a voice was raised through the country to censure the one, or contradict the other.

But the time was approaching, when the name of the Affghan war should no longer be pronounced with indifference in England. The account of the commencement of the great outbreak at Cabool reached England early in 1842; and from that time, every mail brought intelligence of disasters so new and so terrible, that it was difficult to replace the involuntary incredulity they excited with a sense of their reality. At length, after an interval of painful suspense, we knew that our principal force in Affghanistan had been utterly destroyed. It would be vain to deny that these events were the first which, by the doubt which they cast on the policy, really and thoroughly awakened the mass of Englishmen to question the justice of the original quarrel. But whether it was just or not, was not for the time the nearest consideration, while the Affghans yet beleaguered our garrisons, and held numerous prisoners in their hands. A short and decisive campaign accomplished at once the recovery

of the prisoners, and the important and collateral object of retrieving the slur upon our military reputation; and then, with the entire withdrawal of every part of our forces, closed the four years' drama of war in Affghanistan.

Such is a sufficiently accurate outline of the course of these events, and of the feelings with which they were successively received in England. If our account of the latter is true, we need not wonder at the very imperfect degree of knowledge still existing respecting the origin of the war. Still there are features in the case sufficiently remarkable to excite more curiosity.

A war was undertaken with very general acquiescence, continued for four years, and then terminated with all but universal satisfaction. The natural inference would be, that it terminated in the accomplishment of the objects for which it was undertaken. How far such an inference would be just, let the facts known to all the world answer.

We entered Affghanistan to effect a change of dynasty—we withdrew from it, professing our readiness to acknowledge any government which the Affghans themselves may think fit to establish. We entered it to establish a government, above all, friendly to ourselves. Are the Affghans our friends now? In short, a struggle which we commenced in furtherance of a certain line of policy, and with a view to certain objects, has ended in our renouncing those objects, and reversing that policy. Under an assumed necessity, we crossed the Indus: after

a war in which twenty thousand lives have been sacrificed on our side, and countless lives on the other, we have retired within the Indus: and, except for the anarchy we have left in the place of order, the hatred in the place of kindness, all is as it was before. Our conduct of 1842, stands forth before the world as contrasted with and condemning our conduct of 1838. These are results not to be obtained by a laborious search into the history of the last four years, from a comparison of State Papers, they are facts before all the world—to be seen by all eyes which are not resolutely kept shut—as far beyond misrepresentation and doubt as beyond denial. We would urge them again and again upon all those who, having looked with indifference on the commencement, are ready enough to look with equal indifference on the termination of the Affghan war, as presenting in themselves a *primâ facie* case against its originators, or, if they prefer it, its concluders. If we were right formerly, we cannot be right now. If we are not wrong now, we must have been wrong formerly. Without understanding how we were in the wrong, can we feel sure that we are now in the right?

And, supposing that we are entirely satisfied of the rectitude of our present conduct, is the injustice of four years back a matter of indifference? a subject, not to be tried by contemporary judgment, to be questioned at the bar of living opinion, but to be elucidated at some time or other, by curious historical inquiry? Is the statute which limits the time

for the recovery of a debt due from one individual to another, to be applied, and narrowed in its applications, to the transactions of nations? We have been led, influenced by imperfect knowledge, into a course of conduct which, with our present knowledge we would have avoided—how came we to be misled? How far was that knowledge possessed by our responsible leaders? Was their conduct censurable? Was it justifiable? Was it excusable error, or flagrant injustice?

He who is indifferent to the answer to those questions, as regards the events of four years back, would surely feel little interest in the right or wrong of any quarrel into which we might enter to-morrow. In our judgment, enough has already appeared on the subject of the Affghan war to make further inquiry most desirable. That inquiry has been demanded, and hitherto steadily refused. In its absence, the public have a right to assume that the whole case is before them, and to form such a judgment as they can from the existing materials: and we believe that an examination of the question as it stands will lead most persons to a conclusion, in accordance with our own, that the war was unnecessary, unwise, and above all, unjust. To prove the first of these, is, in the present state of the British empire, to prove the second; to prove the third ought to supersede the necessity of proving the other two. The following observations will be principally directed to this point; but they may perhaps be found to contain, incidentally, sufficient evidence upon the others.

The received code of international morality is not, even in the nineteenth century, very strict. One principle, however, seems to be admitted in the theory, if not the practice, of civilized men, that an aggressive war—a war undertaken against unoffending parties, with a view to our own benefit only—is unjust; and, conversely, that a war to be just, must partake of the character of a defensive war. It may be defensive in various ways—in the way either of preventing an injury which it is attempted to inflict, or of exacting reparation for one inflicted, and taking the necessary security against its future infliction: but, in one way or other, defensive it must be. Still it does not follow, that the party who strikes the first blow is always the aggressor. A state may with as much justice advance beyond its own frontier, to oppose the known designs of a hostile state, as an individual may prevent by anticipating the blow of the murderer. In this case, however, it lies upon the assaulting party to bring his conduct within the general rule of self-defence, from which it apparently departs, by showing that he had grounds for apprehending attack.

Such is the case of the Affghan invasion. It is not pretended that the Affghans had injured us either nationally or individually. In the cities of Cabool and Candahar our emissaries had been courteously received and kindly treated. Even the Murrees, Brahoes, Khyberries—the warrior-robbers of their tremendous passes, whose hand has been,

from of old, against every man, had robbed us as little as, before he sought them in arms, the Trojans had robbed Achilles, and for much the same reason—

> *οὐ γὰρ πώποτ' ἐμὰς βοῦς ἤλασαν, οὐδὲ μὲν ἵππους,*
> *. . . . . ἐπειὴ μάλα πολλὰ μεταξὺ*
> *οὔρεά τε σκιόεντα, θάλασσά τε ἠχήεσσα·*

Many a dark mountain-range and broad river lay between us and them. Of the many articles which they covet, camels are the most attractive; yet, up to the year 1838, we do not know that we had lost by them a single camel; if we have since lost fifty thousand, perhaps they who acted after their custom, and according to their knowledge, are hardly more to blame than the party who sought the collision. From the Affghans we had sustained no wrong.

But we apprehended wrong. As it is stated in Lord Auckland's proclamation, the ruler of Cabool "avowed schemes of aggrandizement and ambition, injurious to the security and peace of the frontiers of India;" and, again, he and his brothers, chiefs of Candahar, are spoken of as "ranging themselves in subservience to a hostile power, and seeking to promote schemes of conquest and aggrandizement." The former of these clauses refers to the claims of Dost Mahomed upon Peshawur, then, and since 1835, in the possession of Runjeet Singh; the latter to the Persian attack upon Herat, the anticipated progress of Persia towards India, and the extension of Persian,—that is to say, of Russian,—influence

over the whole of Affghanistan. The whole question of the Affghan war turns upon these two points—Peshawur and Herat.

An intricate series of rebellions, murders, wars within wars, in the course of which the Affghans gave in turn to almost every living member of the Suddozye family his trial as king, terminated about 1810 in their final expulsion, in the person of Shah Soojah. Herat alone remained in the hands of Kamram, a branch of the royal race. The Barukzye family, sprung from the great Affghan minister, Futteh Ali, shared among themselves the three other principalities,—Cabool, Candahar, and Peshawur.

We are content to give one version of the facts respecting Peshawur, in the words of a writer in the *Edinburgh Review*, a professed defender of Lord Auckland's policy.

"Dost Mahomed . . . . . was never ruler in any form, or under any title, of the province of Peshawur, of which, in truth, he demanded not the restitution, but the gift; and which he modestly required that we should extort, as the price of his alliance, from the close grasp of the old lion of the Punjaub. Dost Mahomed was ruler of the city of Cabool, with an insecure authority over some other districts. In the division of power among the Barukzye chiefs, Peshawur fell exclusively to Sultan Mahomed Khan, a half-brother of Dost Mahomed, who seceded from the confederacy with that chief, and thought it for his interest to succumb to the power of Runjeet Singh, and to hold a large jagheer

(fief) within the Peshawur territory as the subject of the Seikh government. This he was holding at the time of our negotiations with Dost Mahomed, who regarded him as his enemy, because he had submitted to the Seikhs. But the territory he had ceded to them was quite as much his, to dispose of, as Cabool was Dost Mahomed's."

On this it may be observed, in the first place, that with any quarrel between Runjeet Singh and Dost Mahomed, we could not pretend to any direct concern whatever. Both were independent powers, at perfect liberty, as far as other states were concerned, to make peace or war with each other; of which liberty, as might be expected from Eastern rulers of hostile races and religions, they had not been slow to avail themselves. If Dost Mahomed, as Lord Auckland remarks, in a tone of virtuous indignation, avowed "schemes of aggrandizement and ambition injurious to the security and peace of the frontiers of India," that is, of the kingdom of the Punjaub, under the dominion, not of the English, but of Runjeet Singh, his persevering and powerful enemy,—Runjeet Singh had not been altogether in the habit of abstaining from schemes of aggrandizement and ambition injurious to the security and peace of the Affghan territories. The terms of our alliance with him were not such as could give us a right to interfere between him and the Affghans, except for purposes of mediation; and if we ever so interfered, justice would have required that our mediation should be for the advantage of both par-

ties; not a mere combination of our strength with that of the stronger, to enforce the submission of the weaker.

Secondly, it should be remembered that the territory of Peshawur, though it had never belonged to Dost Mahomed, was undoubtedly Affghan. It was one of the four Affghan principalities; it had ever been such until the date of its acquisition by Runjeet Singh, through a combination of force, fraud, and good fortune, of which the reader will find an amusing account in Mr. Masson's third volume. The "old Lion of Lahore" never eked out the strength of the lion by the cunning of the fox in a manner more characteristic and successful than on the occasion on which (as Dost Mahomed says, in a letter written in October, 1837, to his brothers at Candahar,) "Peshawur, which is our principal abode, fell into the hands of the Seikhs, on account of the foolishness of Sultan Mahomed Khan, and which has always been a source of great trouble and vexation to us." That Dost Mahomed, the chief of the principal city of Cabool, and if not the ruler, at least the acknowledged head of the Mahometan Affghans, should be anxious to recover for his people the possession of Peshawur, an Affghan city, thus thrown into the hands of their "natural enemies" the Seikh idolaters, was surely no strange or blamable ambition. It was his interest as a ruler, and, we will add, it was his duty as a patriot; though, we doubt not, that, by speaking with gravity of the patriotism of an Affghan, we incur the ridicule of all such as

the reviewer above quoted, who considers Dost Mahomed quite inexcusable in regarding Sultan Mahomed Khan as his enemy, because of his willing submission to the Seikhs; because "Peshawur was quite as much his, to dispose of, as Cabool was Dost Mahomed's."

Quite as much—and quite as little. An Asiatic, a Mahometan, and a prince, Dost Mahomed was, probably, no perfect character. In his difficult position, struggling through life to maintain himself against enemies, foreign and domestic, he had done, we doubt not, many questionable things; he professed, we dare say, no indifference to temptation, no superhuman morality; but we do not find, in any part of his career, any traces of his having thought, as this English writer seems to think, that his country was his, *to dispose of.*

Our mediation, however, between the Affghans and Seikhs, we had a right to offer; and we offered it—but on what terms? Let us again hear the Reviewer:—

"Lord Auckland . . . offered, as the price of an alliance, to guarantee them in their actual possessions against the Seikhs. They refused to break off their negotiations with those who were threatening us with hostility, and inflaming the minds of our most unquiet subjects, unless we consented to despoil Runjeet Singh, and to make over the plunder to them. More than this, Dost Mahomed, being then perfectly aware of the rupture, actual or impending, between Persia and England, and in direct allusion

to soliciting the aid of Persia and Russia, declared that, in support of his designs upon Peshawur, he would call in every foreign assistance that he could command. Lord Auckland lost all hope, therefore, of making use of the Affghans as a barrier, and was compelled to regard them, at a crisis demanding action, as the allies of our enemies; and who affords them the most convenient station from whence to send forth the emissaries of disaffection and rebellion throughout our territories."

The last sentence is open to criticism of more than one kind; in particular, we can make nothing of "and who affords"—*who* affords? One really cannot tell; but the nearest applicable nominative is Lord Auckland, who is probably not the person meant. The hypothesis of some inconceivable misprint may enable the charitable to get over the grammatical difficulties; but the construction is not so difficult to reconcile with grammar as the previous statements with fact. In the possession of Runjeet Singh, certainly Peshawur might be correctly designated as plunder: still it might not be our business to despoil him of it for the benefit of the people whom he had plundered. But if the above sentences imply that Dost Mahomed was ready to accede to our alliance on the terms of the unconditional possession of Peshawur, and no other, they imply what is capable of disproof even by the papers as presented to Parliament. Dost Mahomed was most willing to meet the wishes of the British Government, when those wishes were not incompatible with his own

safety. Nor was it likely that our interference on his behalf would have led to any interruption of our friendship with Runjeet Singh; who had certainly no reason to plume himself on his success in the struggle. In the early part of the year 1837, his troops had been more severely handled by the Affghans than they had ever been before; and it was the opinion of those best qualified to judge, that the Seikh ruler would gladly have had an excuse for resigning on creditable terms his troublesome acquisition of Peshawur. Such an opportunity Burnes, doubtless, thought he had presented to him and the Indian Government, when he induced Dost Mahomed to make the offer of holding Peshawur under a modified acknowledgment of the supremacy of Runjeet Singh—an offer which he considered all which the Indian Government could desire, and more than they could well have expected. "What say you to this," is his expression, in a private letter (referring to a similar plan) "after all that has been urged of Dost Mahomed's putting forth extravagant pretensions?" These overtures, however, did not meet the views of the Indian Government, and they offered other terms, which, with the discussion that ensued upon them, will be found *partly* reported at pages 22—24 of the 5th No. of the Parliamentary Papers.

We offered, as the Reviewer says, to guarantee Dost Mahomed in his present possessions against Runjeet Singh; an offer to which he replied, naturally and truly, "Thank you for nothing—I have hitherto been able to defend myself, and expect to

be so still." We also offered to influence Runjeet Singh to replace Sultan Mahomed Khan in Peshawur. This plan he considered as, not indifferent, but deeply injurious, to him—as endangering him personally, far more than the continuance of the Seikhs in Peshawur; Sultan Mahomed Khan would be the most efficient tool they could employ. "Of Runjeet Singh's power to invade me in Cabool, I have little fear. Of his power to injure me, if he reinstates Sultan Mahomed Khan in the government of that city, I have great apprehension, for in it I see a Mahomedan ruler instead of a Seikh."—(*Parl. Papers*, v. p. 22.)

As Dost Mahomed's rejection of our offers respecting Peshawur is represented as the justification of our breach with him, it is worth while to take some notice of the light in which his objections to the plan proposed by the British Government appeared to the British envoy. This, however, our readers will not find in the Blue Book: the despatch of 26th January, 1838, being one of those which have been submitted to a process which, according to Lord J. Russell, is *not* garbling, but the exercise of the right of prudent selection. The definition of "garble," given by Johnson, is "to part, to sift, to *separate the good from the bad;*" and we find that in this despatch,—a record of various opinions on an important subject—that which appeared to the Government good, is given; while the bad, that is, every part which was likely to militate against the views of the Government, has been most cautiously

excluded. It may be true that the Government is not bound to publish on all occasions the opinions of its officers. They may be unimportant—they may be unnecessary; but in the present case there is something more, there is an attempt to disguise those opinions. It has been also said, that the favourable disposition of Sir Alexander Burnes towards Dost Mahomed was generally known, and did not require to be stated. In the first place, it was not generally known, in England at least; in the second, the opinion of Captain Burnes in favour of Dost Mahomed generally, is one thing; and his conviction that Dost Mahomed's grounds for rejecting a particular proposal of the British Government were in every respect just, is another; and the facts upon which the conviction was formed, another still: and these two last are studiously withdrawn from the knowledge of Parliament.

Dost Mahomed's apprehensions from the plan proposed, and the reasons by which he supported his views, are given, though with very imperfect fairness. In particular, a fact, and a most important one, stated by him, is omitted—and why? Because no one could have read the passage without the conviction that his fears were perfectly reasonable. It states his knowledge of an intrigue for his deposition, which had lately transpired, to which Sultan Mahomed Khan was a party, conjointly with the exiled king, Shah Soojah—the plot being, of course, backed by Runjeet Singh. "What security can I have against a repetition of such practices?"

On Captain Burnes's part, the original despatch contains several such expressions as the following, called forth by a conciliatory proposal made on behalf of Dost Mahomed by one of his brothers; one, noted at the time for his attachment to the English, and whose name has since been yet more honourably distinguished for kindness, good faith and charity, shown towards our countrymen and the Hindoo sepoys in captivity at Cabool—the Nawab Jubbar Khan:

"These observations, coming from the Nawab Jubbar Khan, are the more remarkable, since he is devoted to his brother, Sooltan Mahomed Khan, and would rejoice to see him restored to Peshawur. They consequently carried with me *a conviction that the Ameer's fears are not groundless.*"

What comes immediately before and after this passage is given, but this is suppressed, as is also the whole concluding portion of the despatch, beginning with the awkward words—"It has appeared to me that they (Dost Mahomed's views) call for much deliberation. *It will be seen that the chief is NOT bent on possessing Peshawur . . .*," and proceeding to enforce the justice of his views, the feasibility of the plan proposed by the Nawab, to state the *facts* that a Persian agent with high offers had been forced to quit the country for want of encouragement; that the much-talked-of Russian agent had received "no more civility than is due by the laws of hospitality and nations," and to notice the possible scheme of putting forward Shah Soojah, with a view to the

destruction of the authority of the present rulers, as "one which has happily never been contemplated*. Besides the very questionable nature of such a proceeding, it would not gain the objects of Government." All this, and much more to the same effect, is suppressed; and it was surely well worth—suppression.

This wholesale omission, however, is less remarkable than the mutilation of particular sentences; especially of the first two sentences in the despatch. This instance was referred to by Mr. Roebuck in his, if not unanswerable, certainly unanswered speech of March 1st, 1843†. The omissions were said by his opponents to be quite unimportant. It is a singular defence of a perversion of the truth to say that the subject-matter is unimportant. It suggests the answer, "You appear to have thought it not too unimportant to pervert." A falsehood worth telling is worth detecting; a forgery, though to a small amount, is still a forgery. It will, however, be for the reader to decide what object there could be for omissions, all bearing on the same point, for cutting up two sentences into one, altering the stops, making doubtful what was clear,—except to conceal the fact that the views enforced on Dost

* This allusion to the scheme would seem to indicate, on the part of Captain Burnes, some suspicion that it *had* been already contemplated. The first suggestion of it in the Blue Book occurs in a letter, dated January 1st, to Mr. Macnaghten from Captain Wade, our political agent at Loodiana.

† Motion for inquiry into the Affghan war, March 1, 1843.

Mahomed by the British envoy were—not his, but the Governor-general's—and if there could be any doubt that this, in fact, was the object, that doubt would have been removed by the suppression of the portions of the despatch to which reference has already been made. We print the passage as it stands in the original despatch, with the omitted part in italics, requesting the reader to observe, that in the paper as presented to Parliament, the despatch begins at "regarding," and that the full stop at "governor" is replaced by a comma.

"CAPT. A. BURNES TO W. H. MACNAGHTEN, ESQ.

"Cabool, 26th January, 1838.

"SIR,—*I have now the honour to acknowledge the receipt of your letters of the 25th November and 2nd of December last, which reached me about the same time, (and conveyed the views of the Right Honourable the Governor-general,)* regarding the overtures made by Dost Mahomed Khan, for adjusting his differences with the Sikhs, and the apprehension that the Maharajah would not be disposed to surrender Peshawur on those terms, but be more likely to restore it to Sooltan Mahomed Khan, its former governor. I lost no time in making known these circumstances, (*as well as the sentiments of his Lordship on them*), and the policy which it would be advisable for the ruler of Cabool to pursue."

Can it be imagined that this sentence was so altered without an object? Can any one say that

Mr. Roebuck's remark on it is severer than it deserves? "Did honourable gentlemen opposite know what their verdict would be if they sat to try such alteration as a jury? *He did.*"

We give one more passage as showing the manner in which Dost Mahomed's declining to entertain the proposal presented to him, was at the time received by Captain Burnes on the part of the British Government. "I said, that, if he was thoroughly sincere in his belief, that the restoration of Peshawur to Sultan Mahomed Khan was positively injurious to him; it was proper to state most decidedly, that we had no such design, *and would be a party to no measures of such a tendency.*" In the Blue Book, the last words are omitted—not surely because of the space they would have occupied—perhaps they seemed to convey a pledge too inconsistent with the subsequent conduct of the British Government to admit of their being recorded.

One of the most admirable passages in Mr. Borrow's most amusing book on Spain is an exquisite conversation between the author and a certain ingenious "Nacional;" and the gem of that conversation is the following.

"*Nacional.* 'It appears to me that this *Caballero Balmerson* must be a very honest man.'

"*Myself.* 'There cannot be a doubt of it.'"

Mr. Borrow's hearty assent commands acquiescence; and from echoing it we pass to the gratifying but absolutely necessary inference that the "Caballero" in question, (whoever he may be) neither altered

the above despatch in the manner described, nor caused it to be so altered, nor consciously assented to its being so altered.

This scheme thus rejected by Dost Mahomed on grounds which appeared to our envoy in every respect just, was, as far as we can see, the only definite proposition put forward by the British Government respecting the occupation of Peshawur. It was preceded and followed by overtures on the part of the chief of Cabool, showing anything but indifference to the good-will of the British Government, anything but indisposition to listen to any arrangement which it might recommend. But the British Government continued peremptory in its unjust demand, miscalled an offer of mediation; that he was to give up all claim to Peshawur—all right to interfere in the settlement of that province, and, on his side, to receive exemption from the attacks of Runjeet Singh, from which he had never apprehended danger. And even this he was ready to concede on any terms compatible with his safety; terms which, by placing in Peshawur any one whose influence would not be used to his detriment, might, in his own words, leave him as we found him. He waived all expectations of Peshawur for himself. In the despatch of March 13th will be seen how far Dost Mahomed was ready to advance to meet the wishes of the British Government, even when those wishes included the re-establishment of Sultan Mahomed Khan. But the British Government showed an unwillingness to respond to his advances

—a determined harshness—which it is difficult to explain on any other hypothesis than that they were bent on forcing him into a quarrel. Their *animus* towards him may be partly estimated from the following circumstance, which, it need not be observed, is not found in the Blue Book. It appears that Burnes was directed to require of Dost Mahomed tokens of submission to Runjeet Singh, of such a nature, that he declined to be the channel of any such demand, assigning the reason that to do so would defeat (what he then assumed to be) the object of his employers. "The difficulties had been great, without adding to them. Had Dost Mahomed himself assented, the Mahomedan populace would have despised him and probably prevented him."

These were the offers of either negative advantage, or positive injury, in return for which we required of Dost Mahomed to renounce his pretensions, to sacrifice every prospect of advantage held out to him from other quarters, and even to incur, as we shall see hereafter, their hostility without any assurance of our protection; and because he did not gratefully accept them, he was charged with being "disaffected and ambitious." Disaffected, is we think, a singular phrase to apply to one who was not, and never had been, a vassal of the Indian Government, who was bound to it by no ties either of allegiance or alliance. If disaffection means dislike, the disaffection appears to have been on the other side,

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* *Bombay Monthly Times*, February, 1843.

amounting to a perverse hatred, which would rather accomplish its objects in spite of Dost Mahomed, than through him. And ambitious! the world, which has some common sense sometimes, will apportion justly the charge of ambition between the invaders and the defenders of Affghanistan.

We asked much, and offered nothing; yet it did not follow that we should force a quarrel upon the other party because he demurred to so unjust a bargain. Had our mediation been more reasonable, Dost Mahomed, as an independent prince, had a right to reject it, and remain as he was; the penalty of the rejection being the withdrawal of those "good offices with Runjeet Singh," which we rated so highly. And this, in fact, appears to have been the only penalty held out to him, even up to the time of Burnes' departure from Cabool. Lord Auckland had not then come to the conclusion, that the rejection of a one-sided, but professedly friendly, mediation, is an enormity to be visited by war.

But it may be said, that, although we might, under other circumstances, have allowed Runjeet Singh and Dost Mahomed to fight out their quarrels without interfering, the case became different when one of them, in promotion of his designs against the other, connected himself with those whose "schemes of conquest and aggrandizement" endangered our empire; that is, with the Persians, and the shadow or substance of the Russians. And this brings us to the consideration of the second question; the designs of Persia, the subservience, represented to be volun-

tary, of the Barukyze chiefs to these designs, and the ground for hostility which such subservience presented. If Dost Mahomed's disposition to call in foreign assistance in support of his designs on Peshawur, had in fact placed us under the necessity of dealing with him as an enemy, the necessity would still have been created and raised by ourselves alone; by our resolute indifference to his claims, by our harsh refusal of any concessions. But, in spite of all that we had done to produce it, we were under no such necessity; the attack upon him was not requisite to our security; and the question of Peshawur was not, after all, that upon which the success of Captain Burnes' negotiation turned.

The Shah of Persia, as is well known, advanced claims not only to the sovereignty of Herat, but to the supremacy of Affghanistan generally. At the time of our mission to Cabool, he was besieging Herat with a view to its reduction, and was engaged in intrigues having for their object to induce the Barukzye chieftains to support his attempt upon that city, and to acquiesce in his supremacy; acting throughout, as was supposed, under the direct influence of Russia; the assumed object of the latter being, by approaching her influence to our Indian frontier, to have it in her power to undermine our dominion. We need not enter into the inquiry how far the fear entertained of the designs of Russia against our Indian empire was in itself well founded: or how far the famous and mysterious

Vicovitch was or was not an authorized Russian agent. Probably he was, what it is quite consistent with Russian policy to employ, a tool, more or less encouraged to believe himself an agent, and thrown aside as a tool the moment his services ceased to be advantageous. Possibly too, the designs of Russia were as indefinite as his commission, and extended only to raising up whatever difficulties they could against us, and taking what might come of them. The absence of ground for such apprehensions however, is not proved by the fact, that the Russians afterwards withdrew whatever they thought it convenient to withdraw, and disavowed whatever act of their agents it was inconvenient to maintain. All this cost them nothing but words, it could not cost them a reputation for truth and honesty, which they had not to lose. At the time, these fears were as generally entertained as it now seems to be the tendency to hold that they were exaggerated. The amount of the danger may have been exaggerated, but to its existence, more or less, we have strong testimony. All those public servants whose especial office it was to form an opinion on the politics of Central Asia, Mr. Mc Neill, Mr. Ellis, Captain Burnes,—are agreed upon this point. Mr. Mc Neill writes thus in a letter, dated January, 1838:—

"The evidence of concert between Persia and Russia, for purposes injurious to British interests, is unequivocal, and the magnitude of the evil with which we are threatened, is in my estimation im-

mense, and such as no power in alliance with Great Britain can have a right to aid in producing."

In arguing on the morality, if not on the policy, of the conduct of the Indian Government, we are bound in fairness to take this opinion of the Russian encroachments as our point of view. If, in one respect, it partly justifies Lord Auckland, in another it strongly condemns him. If it be held to prove that there was a necessity for doing something, on the other hand, it points to something as different as possible from what was actually done. Either there was no danger, or such danger as did exist proceeded primarily from Russia, and secondarily from the combination of Russia with Persia. If the cause of rupture with Persia was, that the Shah "had openly connected himself with an European power for purposes avowedly unfriendly, if not absolutely hostile, to British interests;" if, as Mr. Mc Neill says, in the despatch before referred to, "our connexion with Persia has for its real and avowed original object to give additional security to India, and it has been maintained for the purpose of protecting us against designs of the only power which threatened to disturb us in that quarter"—that power, of course, being in both cases Russia—the inference is one which it hardly requires much practice in diplomacy to draw. We are aware that, in the complicated relations of nations, the right course is not invariably that which would naturally suggest itself to a common observer on a first, and perhaps superficial, view. It may be

necessary to strike first at the instrument, rather than the moving power—the hand rather than the head; but there is something too repugnant to truth in the state of things which permits the Czar of Russia to continue our very good friend, while the Shah of Persia, for promoting his designs, is declared our enemy; and the rulers of Affghanistan, for an apprehended readiness to acquiesce in the accomplishment of these designs, are treated as enemies. We have no fear of the Affghans, except as far as they may act in subservience to the Persians; nor of the Persians, except as aiding in the accomplishment of the designs of Russia. The Russians are, "for purposes avowedly unfriendly, if not absolutely hostile" to us, making the Persians their instruments, and it is to be feared that the Persians may be able to injure us through the Affghans. There is a regular gradation in the inimical feelings of the three parties, and we graduate our proceedings accordingly, only in the inverse ratio. We have a polite and friendly, and "perfectly satisfactory" explanation with the Russians; we have a temporary rupture, but no fighting, with the Persians—and we MAKE WAR on the Affghans!

Had all our apprehensions from Affghanistan been well founded, they do not appear sufficient to justify the course which we pursued. On the principles on which the war was undertaken, a reason for war between bordering states would never be wanting. If every apprehension of danger is to be

held to make a war defensive, and therefore just, the whole of Europe might be involved in a perfectly just war to-morrow. We never can be sure of the future intentions of the most amicable neighbour, and we are quite sure that the stronger he is, the more able he will be to injure us if so disposed. Our security, again, is greater in proportion to our strength, and what is expedient for our advantage will, unquestionably, contribute to our security; the next step is to call it *essential* to our security, and the plea of necessity is made out—the old proverbial plea of tyranny. Since we cannot tell how soon we may need our might to protect our right, let us at once identify the two. There is no advantage of which we may not deprive another state, on the ground of securing ourselves against possible danger hereafter. Thus, by a short and easy road, we may pass from defence to aggression: from the principles which armed the Athenians at Salamis to those avowed by the Athenian arguer in the Melian controversy, to the practical, if not the confessed, definition of justice as the interest of the stronger. Since vice first paid to virtue the homage of hypocrisy, the conqueror has never wanted a pretext sufficient for all who chose to find it so.

These remarks will serve to illustrate the manner in which a principle admitted by all may be perverted into an excuse for conduct reprobated by all; and to show that, as it is not every prospect of advantage, so it is not every apprehension of danger, that justifies a recourse to war. The Affghan invasion did

not, we can believe, appear to the minds of those who planned it in the light of mere injustice and aggression; but it is not possible to acquit them of jealous suspicion and consequent indifference to the rights of others. It was one of those pieces of cruel and unjust violence which are the frequent result of the combination of alarm with power. The strongest case that has ever been stated against the chief of Cabool is this:—that, with a view to purposes of his own, he was willing,—not to attack us, not to join actively in any measures undertaken against us—but to acquiesce in the extension of Persian influence over Affghanistan. And when we say purposes of his own, we mean distinctly to exclude the supposition that any hostile feeling towards the Indian Government, any desire to injure our interests as such, entered into these purposes. Whatever his objects were, it stands on record, and has not, as far as we are aware, been ever disputed, that he would have preferred attaining them through our help, and with our countenance, to attaining them by any other course whatever. It was not until he had renounced all hope from us that he listened to the promises of Persia and of Russia; of Persia, be it observed, not even then in a state of declared hostility to the Indian Government, and of Russia, with whom our friendly relations had never been interrupted. "It should not be forgotten," says Sir Alexander Burnes, in a letter written some time after his departure from Cabool, a last attempt to appeal to the justice of the

Indian Government, "that we promised nothing, and that Persia and Russia held out a great deal."

We will assume, however, that had the designs of Persia been carried out, and had Dost Mahomed cooperated with their successful prosecution, he might in the course of events, have subjected himself to be treated as our enemy. But let us look at the state of facts.

It must be recollected that the turning point of all these proceedings was the siege of Herat, and not the siege merely, but the besieging Herat, with a view to depriving it of independence. In the opinion of our ambassador, the Shah of Persia had just grounds of complaint against the ruler of that city. At the time when Herat was hardest pressed, Mr. Mc Neill actually aided in composing the draft of a treaty conceding all the demands of Persia with the exception of those which went directly to compromise the independence of Herat. We did not consider ourselves justified in opposing the Persian Government until all terms, short of the entire subjection of Herat, had been peremptorily and perseveringly refused. Had the Persian Government never made any such pretensions, had it relinquished them on our original remonstrance. what would have become of the assumed necessity for interference in Affghanistan? and what name could have been assigned to our invasion of that country but that of mere and shameless aggression? The persistence of the Shah of Persia in his claims upon Herat was our

ground of quarrel with him, and, except their presumed readiness to acquiesce in this design, what ground, what pretence of quarrel, had we with the rulers of Affghanistan?

The Shah of Persia persisted, our minister withdrew from his camp, and warned him that the occupation of Herat, should it have surrendered, would be considered as a hostile demonstration against England; that troops had already been landed in the Persian Gulf; and, in short, that compliance with the demands of England would be refused at the price of war. Before the Shah received this declaration, a general assault on Herat had failed with great loss, and he must also have been aware of the assembling of a large force within the Indus. After remaining before Herat some weeks longer, he ultimately complied with all the demands of the British minister, and abandoned his enterprise. The camp broke up from before Herat on the 9th September, 1838.

And now, let us ask, what reason was there for marching into Affghanistan? Every object we had professed to desire was attained—Herat was safe—the Perso-Russian scheme was broken up—the danger had passed over. If it was open to us to resume friendly relations with the principal in the affair, it could hardly be incumbent on us to punish even active subordinates, had such been within our reach; much less those who could scarcely be charged with having more than passively favoured the now terminated expedition. Dost Mahomed had, as far as appears, given no assistance whatever

to the Shah of Persia in his attack upon Herat; his brothers of Candahar, little or none.

But, it may be said, whatever effect the retreat of the Persians from Herat might have had on the original question; whatever effect it might have produced six months, or even weeks earlier, it could not be expected to turn Lord Auckland from pursuing the course marked out in his Declaration of October 1st., published before the intelligence of that event arrived; nor from fulfilling the tripartite treaty with Runjeet Singh and Shah Soojah, entered into yet earlier (June 26, 1838), and binding him to co-operate in the restoration of the latter. We are inclined to believe that this was the real state of the case: that the invasion of Affghanistan would never have taken place, had the knowledge of the retreat of the Persians preceded the conclusion of the treaty; had not Lord Auckland felt that he had pledged the faith of the Indian Government to the restoration of the exiled king. Let this argument be admitted to its fullest extent, and the only inference would be that the treaty itself was, and was proved by the result to be, unjustifiable. The treaty was an interference with the independence of the Affghan nation. Such a treaty could be justified only on the grounds of necessary self-defence. The assumed necessity had passed away before the time for executing the treaty had arrived—but the treaty was there. The precipitance, if so it is to be regarded, of the Governor-general, had brought him into the dilemma of breaking his word to the parties to that treaty, or

invading a country with which we had no longer any quarrel. For a remote interest, a possible danger, a hypothetical war in which we ultimately never fired a shot, we had bound ourselves by treaty to sacrifice the independence of the Affghan nation. It would have been better, at least for the two principal parties to the contract, if we had not kept the promise so rashly given. We kept our word, and perpetrated the crime.

If it be said that, although the danger had passed, yet the course we followed was justified by the possibility of its recurrence,—that, the experience which had shown the existing condition of Affghanistan to be capable of becoming dangerous, vindicated the Indian Government in resolving to alter that condition for its own future security,—we would ask, where is the independent state which may not endanger the well-being of its neighbours? which they might not, perhaps, devise some way of settling more in accordance with their own interests? Had Napoleon nothing to apprehend from independent Spain? and was it not probable that the empire of France would derive security from the establishment of his family in the Peninsula? Has the Russian empire, in case of war, nothing to fear from the occupation of its mountain frontier by the yet unsubdued Circassians? Yet we English are in the habit of designating Napoleon's invasion of Spain as an act of gigantic injustice; we should read with exultation in to-morrow's *Times*, that the Circassians had gained another exterminating victory. This is the old plea

in a new form—an attempt to confuse the limits of self-defence and advantage; limits which it is easy to distinguish, except when our own interests are concerned. The Affghans were not our subservient allies, but they were not our enemies. We thought it for our advantage that they should be the former; and we marched an army into their country to make them so. And the means we selected for the attainment of this object were such as no common hostility could justify—the imposition upon the nation of a sovereign whom they had dethroned. To this not ordinary result of even bitter warfare, defensible only where experience has shown the impossibility of remaining at peace with the existing government, we resorted at once, and in the first instance. In announcing our intention of deposing the Barukzye brothers, and restoring Shah Soojah, we took a step equivalent to the assertion of an absolute right of conquest. It was an interference with the internal affairs of an independent people, which, even after a direct attack by them, would have been questionable. In all our proceedings, there is something like a careful reversal of what justice would have dictated. As we made war in preference upon the least offending of three powers, so for a very slight provocation we thought fit to exact an extraordinary retribution;—a retribution amounting not only in theory, but, as the subsequent events show, in fact, to a deprivation of independence.

We dwell the more on this plea of just self-defence, which, when looked at closely, resolves itself into the

unjust, but expedient, because these seem to have been the considerations which in fact determined the course of Lord Auckland and his advisers.

The approach of danger from the side of Affghanistan suggested to them the natural idea of using the Affghan tribes and mountains as a means of keeping it at a distance,—of making Affghanistan, in the words of the Edinburgh Reviewer, a barrier. Through all the changes and chances of negotiation and intrigue, this haunted them, until it became a *fixed* idea; and a fixed idea, like the conception of the monomaniac, must be realized, if not in one way, then in another. That the Affghans could have any rights, except in relation to the British Government, —that the mountains and their inhabitants lay, as they had lain for thousands of years, between the rivers of the Punjaub and Persia, for any other purpose except to serve as a "barrier to British India," —was a conception of which they had grown incapable. To the principle that Affghanistan must in any case be made a barrier, the rest of course followed. It was a minor question of expediency only by what means this object should be effected. If Dost Mahomed would not become our subservient ally, and Shah Soojah would, so much the better for the latter. So strongly had this view, to all appearance, taken hold of the minds of the originators of the war, both here and in India, that its reappearance in Lord John Russell's speech in the recent debate, is not extraordinary. The main question for Lord Auckland's decision is there stated to be, whe-

ther he should have anything to do with Affghanistan at all: through whose means he should interfere was, it is said, a minor consideration. That is to say, whether he should in the attempt to accomplish his aims, respect the independence of the country, by allying himself with the existing chieftains, or in violation of its independence, force upon it a dethroned king, thirty years in exile, was a minor consideration. It may perhaps be worth while to illustrate further the prevalence of this view among the men whose counsels were the more immediate cause of the war.

In the third volume of Mr. Masson's work, in a letter to the author from a prominent actor in the subsequent transactions, occurs a sentence which we do not recollect to have seen hitherto noticed, though it appears to us well deserving of attention. It was written in May, 1838. Let it be observed that, throughout Burnes's negotiation, at that time only just terminated, the Indian Government had been profuse of expressions of friendliness towards the people of the Affghans, with whom, indeed, it never professed to have any quarrel. In bringing back Shah Soojah, we represented ourselves as conferring upon them the greatest of benefits; the settled government of a ruler whom a great part of the people would gladly see restored; and, in short, the Indian Government was always unwilling to confess that it was at war with the Affghans as a people. Let it be recollected too, that the Seikhs are the deadly and hereditary enemies of the Affghans; so much so, that at this time, according to Burnes in

one of his letters written during our occupation of Affghanistan, a Seikh could not have safely appeared in the streets of Cabool in his national dress; finally, that we entered on this question with the professed desire of holding the balance fairly between the Seikhs and the Affghans, who, as Lord Auckland says in a letter to Dost Mahomed, "are a brave people, much respected by the English nation;" and then let us estimate, dispassionately if we can, the morality of the following suggestion:—

"Would you oblige me by stating . . . . whether you think that the Sikhs, using any (and what?) instrument of Affghan agency, could establish themselves in Cabool?"

Mr. Masson states, that in his reply he deprecated this "extravagant notion," and recommended the establishment of Shah Soojah "as the lesser evil," which perhaps it might be.

The writer of this letter seems to have coincided fully in the opinion quoted above, that the question of the means to be employed in accomplishing our object, of making Affghanistan a barrier, was indeed entirely secondary. We hardly know where to look for a parallel to the political immorality displayed in this short sentence; to the self-contented calmness, the courteous tranquillity, with which it suggests the commission of an enormous wrong. Would you oblige me by stating your views of the means by which we may most completely and safely deprive the Affghans, "a brave people, much respected by the English nation," of their inde-

pendence? Can you suggest a plan for bringing them under the dominion of a nation whom they detest with the fully reciprocated hatred of opposed races and religions? Name, if you can, a fitting instrument to aid in this scheme for subjugating his countrymen, and we are ready to adopt and support his cause. Such is the scarcely disguised suggestion of the prime mover in the scheme adopted a few months later, of which, a few years later, he became the principal and memorable victim. Such is the calmness with which a man of eminent abilities, of moral qualities which appear to have won for him the respect and affection of most of those who surrounded him, can contemplate the attainment, by any means, of an object he has taught himself to consider necessary. This letter is signed W. H. Macnaghten. Truly for once "the wheel has come full circle."

Hitherto we have, generally speaking, as far as the question of Herat is concerned, and of the subservience of the Affghan chiefs to Persian influence, given the originators of the invasion the benefit of their own statement of the reasons on which it was undertaken; and we have attempted to show that, assuming the conduct of Dost Mahomed and the Affghan chiefs to have been what it was by them represented, the course followed by the British Government was still unjust and aggressive,—doubtful, previous to the retirement of the Persians from Herat,—after that event, unnecessary and unjust.

It has appeared that the hostility attributed to the Affghan chiefs amounted at most to a disposition consequent on the promises of the Persian court to acquiesce in the accomplishment of its schemes, and the extension of its supremacy over Affghanistan; but did it in fact amount even to this? The Barukzye chieftains are said to have identified themselves with the aggressive policy of Persia, with a view to their own aggrandizement. But what if it shall appear that adherence to Persia was the result of fear, not of ambition? if they were prepared to acknowledge the supremacy of that power merely to protect themselves from being forcibly subjugated by it? An examination of the correspondence relating to Affghanistan presented to Parliament will furnish an answer to these questions. It will there be seen that the alternative presented to Dost Mahomed and his brothers, by the advance of the Persians, was on the one hand alliance with Persia, on the other, its hostility,—that what they required of us on this point, was to guarantee them in their independence against Persia, or otherwise protect them,—that during the residence of Captain Burnes at Cabool, they requested from us some assurance on this point, not once, nor twice, but constantly,—and that their request was met by that officer, in obedience to his instructions, by a direct refusal, or an evasive reference to the value of our sympathy as evidenced by our having sent an agent to Candahar.

Captain Burnes had no choice but to speak thus. In the early part of his mission at Cabool, he had, in

anticipation of the reduction of Herat, and the consequent advance of the Persian army on Candahar, thought it right to offer to accompany Dost Maho-'med and his force to that city, and to furnish money towards the expenses of its defence; an offer for which it appears that he was visited with the severe censure of his employers*. Henceforth, all that the Afighan chiefs had to contrast with the positive and advantageous terms offered them by Persia, under the ostensible guarantee of Russia, were these vague assurances of friendliness and sympathy, coupled occasionally with an appeal to their national pride, which in such a subject seems almost ludicrous, and which was unquestionably adopted by our able emissary, in the conscious absence of anything better to say—"Why, surely you, the brave Affghans, the Dooranees, who have before now carried your swords to Ispahan and Delhi, are not afraid of the Persians!" Such is the answer occasionally given to earnest representations of the danger to which they were exposed, and requests that England, so profuse of assurances of sympathy, would promise to *do something* for them in the way of protection against a dreaded enemy, then offering them the choice of peace or war. Throughout the whole correspondence, during Burnes' residence at Cabool, these two points stand forth as those upon which the fortune of the negotiation turns—an arrangement with Runjeet Singh respecting Peshawur, and *protection from*

* *Bombay Times*, Aug. 1842.

Persia. The defenders of Lord Auckland's policy are apt to omit reference to the latter, as the Edinburgh Reviewer, in the passage we have above quoted, has done.

He charges the Barukzye chieftains with having "refused to break off their negotiations" with the Persians, unless we consented to despoil Runject Singh, &c. It would have been nearer the truth to have said that they were ready and willing to break off their negotiations, but we declined pledging ourselves to protect them against the consequences of doing so. It is true that, on the occasion of Burnes's offer, to which we have referred, the chiefs of *Candahar* showed some insincerity, representing themselves as fearing more from Kamram, the prince of Herat, their old enemy, than Persia; but they afterwards changed their tone, and earnestly requested protection against the latter. At once endangered, and strongly tempted, there is nothing very strange in their wavering; they were in a situation in which every allowance should have been made for them. But for Dost Mahomed, in truth, none was needed. He is charged with having flung himself into the arms of those powers to whom, urged by the strongest impulses of hope and fear, we at length, and with difficulty drove him.

In the despatch of the 25th of April, which contains Captain Burnes's account of a conference between himself and Sirdar Mehir Dil Khan, of Candahar, speaking both for himself and his brother Dost Mahomed, we find that, after a pledge of pro-

tection from Persia has been asked and declined, and the promises of that power, and their guarantee by Russia brought forward, Captain Burnes asked, "if they reposed confidence in these papers? 'Most certainly,' was the reply, 'since they are from Europeans, whose word is inviolable.'—'But,' continued I, 'is not Russia to aid you, through means of Persia; and how does the Shah act towards you? He addresses you as his vassals, and calls your country a part of his own. Are Lord Auckland's letters or views couched in such terms? Certainly not.'—'That may be all true enough,' said the Sirdar, '*but a powerful enemy threatens us; and if you will do no more than use general terms, and go no further than keeping Mr. Leech at Candahar, we must take measures to secure ourselves in the manner best suited for our advantage.*' "

At page 28 of the fifth Number of the Parliamentary Papers, occurs an extract of about twenty-two lines, the sad relics of a long, important, and mutilated despatch—mutilated, did we say? eviscerated—the whole contents being torn out, and little more than the beginning and end given. The original* contains, among much bearing on the same question, and the same side of the question, from the mouth of the good Nawab Jubbar Khan, the following exposition of the case of the Affghans—true in every fact, unanswered, and unanswerable.

After stating that the offer of protection against

* *Bombay Times*, February, 1843.

Runjeet Singh was not of the value the British Government seemed to suppose, since there had never been any fear of his attacking Cabool, the Nawab goes on,—

"That it appeared we valued our offers at a very high rate, since we expected in return that the Affghans would desist from all intercourse with Persia, Russia, Turkistan, &c. *Were the Affghans to make all these powers hostile, and to receive no protection against the enmity raised for their adhering to the British? As for Peshawur being withheld from the Ameer, it might be got over. . . . .*"

To which Captain Burnes could only reply by an assurance that we did "*most sincerely sympathize* with his brother and all the Affghans," and by repeating that he had promised all which he had authority to promise. We are not surprised that the Nawab "took his leave, telling me that he hoped for the best, but that he, too, was disappointed."

Again, in a conversation with Dost Mahomed himself, reported in the despatch of March 25th, after Captain Burnes has stated that the British Government "had no desire to guide him, and that if he did not approve of its offers, he need not accept them," expressions curiously contrasted with its subsequent conduct, Dost Mahomed at once replied,— "I do not see what you are aiming at. I am either kept in the dark, or misled. Never was there such excitement in this land; the Persians are before Herat, openly aided by Russia; that power has sent an agent here, and your Government have deputed

you. I wish no countenance but that of the English, and you refuse all pledges and promises, and mean, I presume, as you are people of your word, to do nothing for me." To which Captain Burnes, as we find, replied, by referring him "to Sinde as an instance of the value of a British connexion;" words upon which a melancholy comment is furnished by the treaty of February, 1839, and the battle of February, 1843.

This same point, of protection from Persia, is urged in the last letter from Dost Mahomed to Lord Auckland. "When the Shah of Persia came to take Herat, which, along with the country of Candahar, is the abode of the Affghans, I asked Captain Burnes to point out the remedy against the Persians, since the English are noted for sympathizing with the Affghans."

Noted for sympathizing, indeed! it will be long before the English cease to be *noted* for the manner in which they have shown this sympathizing—long before the Affghans forget the nature of the sympathy which has been shown to them.

Dost Mahomed afterwards says, "It is now eight months since Captain Burnes came into this country, and about five months since the Persians have besieged Herat; the expectations of the country of Peshawur being restored, or Candahar protected against the Persians, which were entertained for a long time, are gone now from the hearts of the Affghans. . . . . If the restoration of Peshawur required a longer time, there was no harm in saying so; but it

was necessary that Captain Burnes should give pecuniary assistance, that we might be able to protect Herat, and, if unsuccessful, certainly to save Candahar from the Persians. Captain Burnes gave us no assurance on the above-mentioned subjects; perhaps he has no power to do so."

It may perhaps be said that this fear of Persia was merely colourable,—a mere pretext for that "ranging themselves in subservience to a hostile power, and seeking to promote views of conquest and aggrandizement," which Lord Auckland's proclamation denounces with such righteous reprehension. It might be sufficient to reply that the fear is often and earnestly expressed, and is in itself highly probable. We may find, too, an evidence of sincerity in the perfectly natural manner in which this point is urged, with a varying earnestness corresponding to the complexion of the news from Herat.

When the prospects of the besiegers are adverse, it is brought forward more carelessly, and withdrawn on the British envoy's referring as a sufficient answer to the late intelligence; when the reduction of the besieged is expected, it is dwelt upon with the earnestness of real and pressing alarm. At the time of the termination of Burnes's mission, the news of its capture was almost daily expected; and his own words show that he believed the chiefs to be perfectly sincere in the fear that they expressed, and that this, and not the restoration of Peshawur, was the point which immediately led to his departure from Cabool, and to the failure of the negotiation he was instructed to conduct.

The following passage, which actually appears in the papers presented to Parliament, if nothing more had appeared, would have been sufficient to establish the utter defiance of justice shown by the Indian Government in this matter. It occurs in the commencement of the despatch of the 25th April, already referred to. "The immediate cause of such a step" (that is, his quitting Cabool) "being necessary, is the arrival of Sirdar Mehir Dil Khan from Candahar, and the demands in consequence made by him, in which he has been joined by the Ameer, *for a direct promise of protection, from Persia, should Herat fall, of which there is no doubt now entertained by the authorities here.*"

This is enough; but yet more direct and strong is his language in a private letter written immediately after his retirement from Cabool, in which, after referring to the failure of his mission, he hints that possibly he may be now ordered to lead the ex-king against the Barukzyes. "This last *I will not do.* (would that he had kept this resolution!) The Barukzyes consigned themselves to us, and merely asked for Persia to be warned off, and we would not do it!—fear, not will, therefore, made them desert us!*"

In the letter of Dost Mahomed to Lord Auckland, to which reference has been made, as well as in other parts of this correspondence, the feeling is expressed with a kind of affecting simplicity, that he could not understand the English; that they required much and promised little; that they seemed to attach

* *Bombay Times*, August, 1842.

little value to his friendship, at the same time that they demanded it; that they called on him to sacrifice the good-will of others without the return of their protection. And such, in fact, seems to have been their feeling. They were willing to grant him the honour of becoming their tool, if he on his part was willing to become so; but they would not pledge themselves that he might not be broken in the process. They left him to choose between—their *sympathy* coupled with a danger from which they would not engage to protect him—and offers of the most tempting kind presented at the sword's point by a powerful enemy. Because he chose the latter, they made war upon him. Expressions of indignation would be wasted upon conduct of which the mere recital is so damning.

The case would be incomplete if we did not add that the Indian Government, consistent with its policy of mystery and insincerity—its systematic attempt to bind the Affghans by pledges while refusing to bind ourselves—never appears to have fairly laid before Dost Mahomed the peril he might incur by refusing compliance with its demands. The envoy, as instructed, spoke vaguely of our friendship, referring him as above to Sinde for an instance of the advantage of British connexion—and mysteriously of the loss of our friendship—expressed his wishes as a personal friend, that Dost Mahomed would see that a connexion with the British would be of advantage—his hope that the Ameer might never see cause to repent of the course he had pur-

sued,—but that was all. As he never definitively promised, so he never definitively threatened.

He never laid—his employers had not instructed him to lay—before the Affghan chief the tremendous alternative of alliance or war with the greatest power within his knowledge, which the rejection of his proposals involved.

What the answer to such an alternative would have been may be questioned. Dost Mahomed could not know, what the British Government apparently had not yet brought themselves to determine, that this was, in fact, the alternative presented to his choice. A vague fear of possible danger seems occasionally to have been excited in his mind, and repressed by the natural thought that he had done nothing which could possibly expose him to the hostility of the British. "The Affghans have done nothing wrong, that other governments should blame them; nor have they received any injury from the English."

We have seen in the despatch of the 24th of March, the envoy disclaiming, on the part of the Government, any intention to "guide" the Ameer. A letter, addressed by him to Dost Mahomed, on April 24th, immediately before his departure for Cabool, after speaking of the views of the British Government towards the Affghan nation, as full of *friendship and disinterestedness*, proceeds to refer in these terms to the alternative presented to Dost Mahomed:—"If the Ameer receive the good offices of any power to the West, he need not complain"—

of what? Of having his country invaded, his followers slaughtered, himself deposed by a British army? No,—"of being refused those of the British Government in his difficulties hereafter;"—and, shortly after, follows this sentence: "The Ameer will observe, that he has the perfect exercise of his discretion; and that if he considers the Governor-general's views at variance with his interests, he is the best judge."

If these words are not,—what the character of the writer, and his feelings towards Dost Mahomed forbid our considering them,—a mere piece of deceitful irony, they have no other meaning than this:—We have offered you a close connexion with us; you are not satisfied with the terms of our offer, and you reject it; you are the best judge of your own interests, but you may, perhaps, hereafter regret having done so, when the time comes at which our aid might have been useful; having rejected our offer, you cannot complain if we refuse to help you in your difficulties. We are as we were before; bound to each other by no relation of peculiar friendship.

On this head we cannot help referring to Lord Auckland's last letter to Dost Mahomed, which the reader will find at page 44 of No. V. of the Parliamentary Papers. It conveys no threat; it says nothing of possible measures which may hereafter be found requisite to our security; it utters no whispers of war; it begins with courteous regret upon the failure of attempted "mediation for the settlement of the unhappy differences existing" between

Dost Mahomed and Runjeet Singh; and ends with a deserved acknowledgment of the attention and kindness shown to Captain Burnes and the other British officers. Think of what followed upon this. This was the last direct communication from Lord Auckland to Dost Mahomed; the next was indirect —the Proclamation of Simla. Conduct for which such a letter was a fitting return, was afterwards held to justify the Affghan war. We need not press this further. To have denounced war as the alternative of Dost Mahomed's acceptance of the terms offered, would, in our judgment, have been an act of unprincipled violence, but still open and bold. The Affghan chief could not have accused us of misleading him; the state of the case would have been before him, and (whatever his feelings towards us might have been) his estimation of our power might probably have induced him to accept our terms. But, standing as it does, we designate the act as one of perfidious violence. It reduces the British Government below the comparative honesty and humanity of the highwayman, who at least presents his victim with the alternative of "Your money, or your life."

The letter from Dost Mahomed to Lord Auckland, before noticed, may be considered as expressing the feelings with which that chief, on his part, viewed the termination of the negotiations. Its style is pathetic and earnest: it refers to the hopes which the mission of Captain Burnes had excited, and to the failure of those hopes, in a tone certainly of disappointment, but of anything rather than hostility;

and its conclusion seems to point at a hope that the British Government may yet see fit to befriend him. Its last words are striking: "*What is worthy of the good name of the British Government, it, I hope, will come to pass in future;*" words, simple in the meaning with which they were used, but which now seem to have been suggested to Dost Mahomed by the bitter irony of fate; like the careless but fateful sayings which the Greeks believed to be prompted by an approaching Nemesis. What, one naturally asks, must have afterwards been the half-taught, yet clear-sighted and high-spirited Mahometan's opinion of the men with whom he had been dealing? of these rulers of India, these Englishmen, these Christians? who approached him with proffers of advantage, with professions of *disinterested* friendship and sympathy! who raised large hopes by vague generalities, which they would not fulfil in any particular; who expected of him entire adhesion to their plans, yet would not pledge themselves to protect him against the possible consequences of such adhesion; finally, who parting with him on terms of courtesy, returned with twenty thousand bayonets to set their puppet in his place, and bear down the "factious opposition" of the people they had so often professed their wish to befriend!

The Indian Government, however, were apparently well satisfied with their own conduct towards Dost Mahomed; they wiped their mouth, and said they had done no evil. There is a curious and really edifying paper addressed, in August, 1838, by Lord

Auckland to the Secret Committee, announcing the conclusion of the treaty with Runjeet Singh for the restoration of Shah Soojah. Parts of it, indeed, read like the high tone of a man attempting to persuade himself out of a suspicion that he has done wrong; but there is one portion peculiarly worthy of notice. After talking confidently "of the justice of assisting to his throne the *lawful* sovereign of Affghanistan," (as if that were any concern of ours,)—after giving in words, part of which were afterwards borrowed by the Proclamation of Simla, the reasons which have been already examined for deposing Dost Mahomed and his brothers—their identifying themselves with "schemes of aggrandizement and conquest," and the hostility of Dost Mahomed to our old ally, Runjeet Singh (the "unprovoked attack" of the Proclamation,) Lord Auckland proceeds as follows:—

"Still it must be admitted, that in one respect the conduct of the Barukzye chiefs is not without some colour of excuse; and, though a spirit of ambition was, unquestionably, the governing motive of Dost Mahomed's conduct, yet he and his Candahar brothers may not have been without apprehension of the displeasure of the powers to the westward, in the event of their holding back from the Persian alliance."

So there was some excuse; and Lord Auckland himself admits that the fear of consequences, against which he directly refused to guarantee the Affghan chieftains, was really felt by them; that they were in earnest, and spoke the truth, when they spoke of their apprehensions from Persia. We take this

admission for what it is worth—that is, for a complete unanswerable establishment of the point for which we have been above contending—that we would not secure them against a danger which we visited them with war for not disregarding. But we are yet more anxious to draw attention to the continuation of the paragraph:—

"It is my intention, therefore, when our preparations are sufficiently matured, to tender to Dost Mahomed Khan an honourable asylum in the Company's territories."

Noble and generous enemy! It was actually your intention not to give up the head of an independent state, the courteous host of English emissaries, the brave man who held by the consent of his countrymen the highest place amongst them; who had repelled, by their aid alone, the rival whom you were about to restore with a foreign army,—not to give him up, though subdued, to the mercies of an implacable enemy, but to offer him,—never the enemy of the British Government, till it made him so by attacking him,—an honourable asylum in the British dominions! We do not wish to be mistaken. Lord Auckland, if wrong in every other particular of his conduct, was right in this; but it was the least he could do, and not as he seems to have thought, the most; and it is no wonder if Dost Mahomed received the offer of an asylum, coupled with the announcement of his own deposition, without any transporting gratitude.

We may here terminate our remarks on the originating causes, as far as we have been able to discover them, of this unjust war. We have not thought it necessary to waste argument upon the talk, put forward in full consciousness of its ineptitude, with the mere view of raising a mist to obscure the real nature of the transaction, respecting the lawful sovereignty of Shah Soojah and the usurpation of Dost Mahomed. In that sense, the Great Mogul is the lawful sovereign of India, and the King of Sardinia, or somebody else, we forget at present who, of the British empire,—and the rule of the English in India, and Queen Victoria in England, is a usurped dominion. Neither is it requisite to enter into a comparison of the moral character of the ruler, whose friendship we had rejected, and the king whose allegiance to our cause we were content to purchase at so dear a cost; and, as it seems, purchase insecurely. Whether Shah Soojah was only weak, as some of his friends allowed, or, as his enemies stated, weak, perfidious, and cruel; whether Dost Mahomed was the brave, just, and able ruler which he appeared to most of the European travellers in Affghanistan, and which many even of those Affghans who, on our advance into the country, under apprehension of a power which they thought it useless to resist, left his cause for that of Shah Soojah, proclaimed him to be; all this is beside the question we have had to consider. That question was, whether the Affghan chiefs had merited at our hands the infliction of an aggressive war. We have

also avoided mixing up the question of the necessity and justice of the war, with its conduct and our subsequent misfortunes. This view, and the consequent tendency to make Lord Auckland's original policy answerable for the disasters which followed upon it, is not uncommon. It is earnestly argued against by the Edinburgh Reviewer, from whom we have quoted some passages; and we agree with him that it is unjust and misleading. We may indeed measure, in some uncertain degree, the oppression we exercised, by the exasperated reaction it provoked; but this is all, and applies perhaps more to our subsequent conduct than to the justice of the original quarrel. If any one into whose hands these pages may fall, should be conscious of sharing the feeling noticed above—of doubting the justice of our conduct only when our losses began to make the policy look questionable—let him recollect that this is but to repudiate iniquity when its wages fail us; that in the history of the world, injustice has often been perfectly successful; and that the injustice of our attack would be what it is to-day, had we still our foot upon the neck of our enemy.

The crime, if a crime has been committed, is one of which the responsibility is shared by every Englishman. It is no new thing to say that a nation, and especially a free nation, is generally accountable for the conduct of its government. But with respect to such transactions as the Affghan war, the English people has a more direct and heavier responsibility. Our position, as rulers of India, not only places in

our hands the destinies of our hundred million subjects, but makes us to the greater half of mankind the representatives of Christendom and European civilization. We may teach them to identify the idea of a European with wisdom, mercy, and justice, or with the fearful intelligence and strength, guided by the disposition of a demon. What Asia shall be, a hundred years hence, lies in our hands.

Yet this responsibility is slightly felt, is sparingly acknowledged. It is confessedly difficult to excite interest upon Indian or Asiatic topics, whether in Parliament or elsewhere. Many a worthy friend of civil liberty, who follows up with virtuous indignation the case of a drunken man, unjustly knocked down in the next street by a policeman, cares little whether it is with justice or injustice that we have slain our tens of thousands in Asia. Many a subscriber to Bible Societies, many a zealot in the cause of converting the heathen, hears with coldness, and considers with indifference, the recital of actions which may turn the hearts of countless millions against the very name of Christianity. This indifference is the cause, but it is in part also the consequence, of ignorance, and of ignorance which is to a great extent unavoidable. The distance, the pressure of nearer and more familiar interests, the real difficulty of understanding any particular topic, without more general information on the subject than is possessed by most men, render its entire removal impossible. But it is possible, and most desirable, to obviate its worst effects. In proportion as the con-

ductors of our foreign relations, and especially the rulers of our Asiatic empire, are necessarily trusted with a greater amount of unlimited power, frequently exercised beyond the sphere of the knowledge of their countrymen, and quite removed from the daily check of their opinion, it becomes more and all important that they should act under the fullest conviction that the use or abuse of this power is not a subject to which their countrymen are indifferent—that the responsibility transferred by the nation to them is in no degree diminished by the transfer—that they are trusted only as a man ignorant of law trusts his agent to a certain end, in which he is nevertheless deeply interested—and that the power with which they are intrusted is used in violation of the purpose of the trust, if used unjustly. If the country cares little for all this, its representatives abroad will share in its feelings. If the country feels fully the criminality of an unjust war, and is deeply and sincerely anxious that its power shall be used in the furtherance of good, means are not wanting to impress a similar feeling on the delegates of its power; the men whose words, often without its previous consent, set in motion its distant armies.

That the nation felt thus, would by no means interfere with that enlarged and liberal confidence which, under certain limitations, it is both right and expedient it should repose in its servants. It would not for any idle cause, or vague rumour, question the conduct of those whom it had thought right to confide in. But, if on any occasion there should

appear strong grounds for believing that injustice had been perpetrated, it would not rest satisfied without some certainty on such a subject; it would not acquiesce, as it has lately acquiesced, in a mere vague suspicion. Honest Tories would not be contented with believing that the late government had done something more wrong than usual in Affghanistan, from the consequences of which Sir Robert Peel had perhaps too generously sheltered them. Honest Whigs would not be quite easy under the thought, that the Affghan war was an awkward business, about which the less that was said the better. In short, Mr. Roebuck's motion * would have been conceded, or if refused, refused on very different grounds from those assigned by its opponents, and in particular by the Premier. He would not on an occasion so grave as a motion for inquiry whether the power of England had been used cruelly and unjustly, have begun by resorting to the very parliamentary, but rather worn-out jest, of proving out of Hansard the inconsistency of an individual member. Neither would he have rested his refusal of the motion on a long list of inconvenient inquiries which might arise from granting this one; a precedent, as it would prove, for digging up ten years of buried diplomacy.

'Twill be recorded for a precedent.

Sir Robert Peel is a brave man; but there is one thing which Sir Robert Peel seems to contemplate with panic terror—an inconvenient precedent. He

* March 1, 1843.

has less fear of a pistol than a precedent. "If this inquiry is granted, we shall be called upon to grant a dozen others, and shall not be able to refuse with such a precedent before us."

Need we state the obvious answer? If this inquiry be applied for on sufficient grounds, grant it—it is your duty to do so. If other inquiries be applied for on equally sufficient grounds, grant them; if on insufficient grounds, refuse them; you will have established no precedent against doing so; you will only have established a precedent applicable to all cases, though inconvenient in some, of acting rightly and justly.

Neither would he have thought it an answer to say that the time for inquiry was gone by; that the affair, which might have been a very bad one, and indeed of which he had uniformly disapproved, ought to have been censured formerly, if at any time; but that all had been ready to acquiesce in it then, and made themselves parties to the transaction. "Let bygones be bygones," is a good and true saying, as between the wronged and the wronger, not as between the judge and the offender. It might, indeed have been true that all were in fault, though not all equally, and we have sufficiently shown our opinion that all were so; but this, whatever bearing it might have upon the retribution due to individuals, strengthens, rather than diminishes, the reason for national retrospect and inquiry.

To say that these reasons appear to us frivolous, is to say that they are not, in our opinion, the grounds

upon which Sir Robert Peel really acted. The actual reasons for the course which Sir Robert Peel adopted may be guessed; and they were not frivolous, but strong. He knew, that to grant the inquiry demanded would expose him to the charge of vindictive partisanship; of an ungenerous use of his power as a minister to the injury and disgrace of his former rivals; of having made the pretended interest of the public a screen to the gratification of private animosity. He knew that this charge would be made by all the other side, and believed by many of his own; that the large proportion of all parties to whom politics are a game, would regard this as an unfair move; that it would embitter against him a hundred for one whom it conciliated; that it would change political opponents into personal enemies. It would have become a question of passionate interest; it would have thrown the country into agitation; it would have interfered with the progress of other and important business; it would have disturbed many minds sincerely intent upon discovering, if possible, a remedy for the existing distress, and fixed them for the time on the events of some years back, and the doubtful report of a committee. All statesmen would have felt the weight of these reasons, but some would have placed in the opposite scale the benefit of a solemn renouncement and reproval of injustice, and have thought that it overweighed them all.

Inquiry, however—the inquiry which the voice of the country might have compelled—has been refused, and will certainly not now be granted. The public

indifference, the parliamentary carelessness, about a question which never yet turned an election, threw away an occasion of demonstrating that England required from the trustees of her power justice in their dealings with weaker nations. It seems the more desirable that all who have formed a decided opinion on the case as it lies before them, should express it; not only for the duty of doing so, but for the chance that the collective opinions of individuals may ultimately produce some fraction of the effect which might better have arisen from a national judgment; as at some place of crime, unmarked by any solemn and public memorial, every passer-by contributes to heap up an expiatory monument of abhorrence, at once a protest and a record. We have added our stone to the cairn.

THE AFFGHAN WAR*.

. . . . Πολλὰ δ' ἀέλπτως κραίνουσι θεόι,
Καὶ τὰ δοκήθεντ' οὐκ ἐτελέσθη,
Τῶν δ' ἀδοκήτων πόρον εὗρε θεός.
Τοιόν δ' ἀπέβη τόδε πρᾶγμα.

The Gods doom many things against our hope,
Our prudent schemings miss their scope:
The Gods find ways to that we least intended;
And *so* this thing has ended.

HAVING examined the reasons upon which the invasion of Affghanistan was founded, and expressed the opinion to which that examination has conducted us, we now proceed to offer some notice of the manner in which the great and unjust scheme was carried out; something like a sketch of the beginning, middle, and end, of that strange and tragic drama. The incidents themselves are sufficiently exciting to attract the attention of those even who read merely for the gratification of curiosity, or for amusement; and for all those who find any meaning in the course of human events, few passages in recent history contain a deeper moral.

* The works principally referred to in the following sketch of the Affghan war, are those of Captain Havelock, Dr. Atkinson, Major Outram, Mr. Masson, Dr. Kennedy, Lady Sale, and Lieutenant Eyre, and Dr. Buist's *Outline of the Operations in Affghanistan*, published first in the *Bombay Monthly Times*.


Kohistan
Jellalabad
Cabul
Ghuznee
Cashmeer
AFGHANISTAN
Kelat-e-Ghiljee
Candahar
Quettah
Lahore
PUNJAB
Loodiana
Ferozpore
Bhawulpore
Kelat
Lahore
BELOOCHISTAN
SINDE
Shikarpore
Sukkur
Bukkur
Khyrpore
Hyderabad

The interest which attaches to the late events in Affghanistan has in some degree extended to the earlier progress of the war, and it is probable that the works on the subject have been more generally read in the year 1843 than they were at the date of their publication. We do not notice them with the purpose of criticising to any great extent their literary claims to attention.

To those who feel any historical interest in the subject, any wish to know what really happened, and how, they will all be more or less interesting; though going to a certain extent over the same ground, they present the variety of incident and character which is to be expected from Journals; and the general impression derived from the comparison of three or four will be nearer historical truth than would be that arising from any one.

Captain Havelock's is, we believe, the generally received military history of Lord Keane's campaign in Affghanistan. In addition to a clear and spirited account of the campaign, it contains sundry interspersed observations on its conduct, and these seem to be written with honesty and freedom. Captain Havelock is a decided admirer of the policy which dictated the invasion of Affghanistan; and we presume that he includes in his estimate of the duties of an aide-de-camp to the general commanding a division of the invading force, a pretty thoroughgoing partisanship on the side of the king whose cause we embraced. He believes entirely in the dangerous approach, grasping ambition, and injustice of Russia, and draws from his belief curious inferences to guide

the conduct of England. Apparently, the best way to encounter injustice and ambition is to imitate them. He frankly asserts the propriety of subjecting to our influence, that is, subduing, all states lying between our Indian frontier and the Russian empire. "Those who are not decidedly for us," he says, "may be justly assumed to be unequivocally against us," and may of course, be treated accordingly.

Dr. Atkinson carries even farther than Captain Havelock the view of the case which we presume was then the fashionable one among the *employés* of the Indian Government. He is, what a writer in the *Bombay Times* somewhere calls him, the "courtly" historian of Shah Soojah; he is indeed an enthusiast in his favour, and on the occasion of taking Ghuznee, becomes his self-elected poet laureate, putting into the mouth of Mahomed of Ghuznee a series of verses, descriptive of the coming golden age of Affghanistan, as bad as if they had proceeded from a genuine Mahometan Whitehead or Pye; singularly unpoetic, and, alas! even more inauspiciously unprophetic. We might, if we pleased, give our readers some specimens, which, compared with the subsequent facts, are so curiously and literally contradictory, that they are as amusing as anything ludicrous on such a subject can be; but we abstain, merely recommending Dr. Atkinson, whose beautiful lithographed sketches of the scenery of the march are certainly more attractive than his poetry, to express his enthusiasm hereafter by the pencil only.

It is curious, as illustrative of the careless ignorance of the feelings of the Affghan nation, which

prevailed even after the conclusion of Lord Keane's expedition, to compare the views given by these two writers of the popularity of the English and Shah Soojah in Affghanistan, with each other and with the event. In Captain Havelock's opinion, the Affghans disliked the Shah, but were delighted with the prospect of living under the just and settled rule of the English. In Dr. Atkinson's—but we must give in his own words his exhibition of the mutual feelings of the English and Affghans:—

"The power which raised him (the Shah) to the throne is the principal drawback on his popularity. *It is difficult for the people rightly to comprehend the policy which influenced that measure. They can see nothing in our advance to Cabul but a scheme of conquest. . . .*" (What extraordinary dulness on their part!) "*The Affghans are the most bigoted, arrogant, and intolerant people* imaginable, and they equally detest our interference, our customs, and our creed. They look upon us at once with dread and contempt; subdued and prostrate as they are by our power, they yet despise us as a race of infidels, and, without one quality to warrant their being numbered generally among the class of civilized beings, they have, nevertheless, vanity enough to suppose that we have not sufficient penetration to detect and suspect their subterfuges and cunning, their doublings and deceit."

Subsequent events may, perhaps, be thought to have shown that this *vanity*, at least, was not ill-founded. "*Odisse quem læseris,*" is a proverbially common feeling; and if Dr. Atkinson is to be re-

garded as the exponent of English feeling towards the Affghans, here is as strong an example of it as we recollect to have met with. The Affghans have saved us the trouble of solving the intricate knot of these contradictions—by cutting it asunder.

If there are any readers to whom Captain, now Colonel Outram's name has not long become familiar, we can only tell them his *Rough Notes* contribute to vindicate for him the reputation he enjoys of being a judicious, active, and daring soldier; that he appears throughout the campaign in Affghanistan, to have been the officer on all occasions selected for any service which might seem more peculiarly to require these qualities; that he has chased more refractory chiefs, captured more strongholds, and in a rough way, for the time, pacified a greater extent of rough country than any one on record; and finally, that he has the credit of having, in the character of Resident at Hyderabad, done all that could be done by a moderate, prudent, and humane servant of his government to prevent or defer the destructive crisis of conflict to which, ever since the great aggressive move of Lord Auckland, things in Sinde have been constantly tending—a reputation, if equally merited with the rest of his honours, how infinitely preferable to them all!

The last on our list of works relating to the early campaigns in Affghanistan is Dr. Kennedy's, and to us it is the most pleasing, partly as echoing our own feelings on the policy of the war, though generally in a light and satirical tone. It contains, however, the following remarkable passage, which is very striking

when we consider that it appeared before any facts or surmises could have been thought to justify it. But there is no wonder that the spirit of indignant denunciation of wrong should for once be one with the spirit of prophecy.

"The day of reckoning is not come yet; but it will come, and bring with it results *at which the ear of him that heareth of them shall tingle.*"

We are not able to refer at this moment to the passage, but these are, we think, nearly the exact expressions. Did not the tidings of the winter of 1841 make the ear of every hearer throughout Europe to tingle?

For the rest, Dr. Kennedy is a pleasant and lively writer, a bit of a humorist, a bit of a philosopher, and as humorist and philosopher should be, a kind-hearted man. He loses his baggage by thieves, in the Bolan Pass,—it is very annoying; but it does not make him approve of the wholesale executions. by which Sir J. Keane thought it right to terrify the plunderers: his natural inclination is to laugh at the follies of men, but he can express just and earnest indignation when the crime predominates over the folly. His last visit at Cabool is to the tomb of Baber, his last at Ghuznee to the tomb of Mahmoud, where the *Superintending Surgeon to the Bombay Column* of the Army of the Indus meditates on the transitory nature of human grandeur. "'Vanity of vanities, all is vanity,' repeated I to myself, as I wondered what had become of the Sultan's chief of the medical department."

The "Outline of Operations," in the monthly *Bombay Times*, is, in fact, a *history* of the Affghan war,—a history which we should gladly see rescued from the perishable (and often illegible) columns of an Indian newspaper, and transformed into a more permanent shape*. The number published on the 1st of February, 1843, contains the account of Lord Keane's campaign. The inquiry into the causes of the war appears in the March number, and is illustrated by many despatches and parts of despatches which were never laid before Parliament, and of some of which we gratefully availed ourselves in our previous remarks. That of April, 1843, carries the history to the end of 1840. The writer is no friend of the originators of the war, but the grounds on which his view is supported are such as hardly admit of misrepresentation, and lie open to the judgment of every one. In the history of the war itself, his facts are apparently collected with care, and *generally* supported by the military memoir-writers of the campaign; and his estimate of the characters and conduct of individuals has every appearance of impartiality.

Such are the principal sources from which a knowledge of the earlier progress of the war may be sought. Mr. Masson's work, to which we shall hereafter refer, contains an account by an eye-witness and actor in many of the scenes he describes, of the

* Dr. Buist, the author of the "Outline, &c.," has now (1844) published it separately.

Khelât insurrection in 1840; "an episode merely," as he says, "of the great political drama enacted west of the Indus," but not the least interesting, nor the least painful part of the drama. Upon works which, like Lady Sale's and Lieutenant Eyre's *Journals*, are in every one's hands, it is almost superfluous to offer any general remarks. Though, of course, indebted for the avidity with which they have been read, mainly to the curiosity felt in reference to their subject, they are yet intrinsically entitled to much praise: they are most interesting records of events which no record could make quite uninteresting. Written by eye-witnesses, and without affectation, they have the one surpassing merit of reality; and the consequence is, that they make, what seemed when we first heard it the incredible story of the Cabool catastrophe, not only credible but intelligible. They coincide with each other to a degree which speaks well for their mutual accuracy, the main difference being, that the one is written by an actor in the scenes described, the other by a deeply-interested observer. There is, indeed, another not uncharacteristic distinction. The honourable caution of the military man, the anxious desire not to blame unjustly, the not unfrequent statement of facts from which the reader cannot but *infer* a severe censure, without the direct suggestion of any,—all this contrasts strikingly with the honest unreserve, the feminine vehemence, with which Lady Sale utters, from her whole heart, her well-merited praise or blame. Each book is in this respect just what it ought to be.

Lieutenant Eyre's position as an officer doubtless strengthens, in this respect, his manly instinct of cool judgment and fairness; and the result is highly honourable to him. Perhaps the most remarkable feature in his book is the fair, calm, and unexaggerating tone with which he relates the long catalogue of errors and misconduct. He never blames without stating his reasons; and he gives praise or blame in opposition to his confessed personal predilections. Towards all on his own side—the English side—Lieutenant Eyre is uniformly and scrupulously just. If in his estimate of their opponents he appears to us occasionally partial and inconsistent,—if he deals a little too freely with words like "rebels," and "treason,"—if he sometimes seems to attribute to the whole nation the atrocities committed by a part,—we can, in his circumstances, excuse such an error without being misled by it. No one can read the work without receiving on the whole a most favourable impression of the writer.

Passing from the consideration of these works to offer some remarks on the course of the war, we cannot begin more appropriately than with a quotation from the proclamation of Simla. What actually has been we shall see afterwards; it was thus that, in October, 1838, the Indian Government announced what was to be:—

"His Majesty Shah Sooja-ool-Moolk will enter Affghanistan surrounded by his own troops, and will be supported against foreign interference and factious

opposition by a British army. The Governor-general confidently hopes that the Shah will be speedily replaced on his throne by his own subjects and adherents, and when once he shall be secured in power, and the independence and integrity of Affghanistan established, the British army will be withdrawn."

We place this passage here as a text, upon which any outline of the history of the next four years will be found to furnish an impressive comment. Contradicted in almost every particular by the subsequent facts, it received its first, and perhaps its most emphatic, contradiction from the government who proclaimed it.

"His Majesty Shah Sooja-ool-Moolk will enter Affghanistan surrounded by his own troops."

What was the composition of the troops here described as his Majesty's own? They were Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk's own, in a sense rather less strong than that in which the Eleventh Hussars is "Prince Albert's Own." The Eleventh Hussars is not more dependent on the Horse Guards than these troops were on the Indian Government. They were levies raised partially from the camp-followers of the Company's regiments. They were Hindostanees, subjects of the Company, officered by British officers, paid by British gold, at the entire disposal of the British authorities; "it was notorious," says Colonel Dennie, who had the agreeable occupation of drilling these undisciplined levies, "that there was not a single Affghan among them."

"His Majesty will enter Affghanistan surrounded by his own troops."

This statement was deliberately made; apparently it was not true. What was it then?

Lord Palmerston's attempted defence (for this, like every other step in the business, Lord Palmerston is ready to defend,) amounts to saying that it was—an erroneous conjecture; that the statement was made six months before the actual advance of the army; and might therefore have been *intended* to be true, though contradicted by subsequent events. It is a new thing to be told that state papers are not declaratory, but rather prophetic or conjectural; that the principle,

O Laertiade, quicquid dicam *aut erit—aut non,*

is to guide us in interpreting the public declarations of the intentions of a government. But the defence, such as it is, will not stand; if the march began only six months later than the declaration, the raising of the levies did not—and at the time at which Lord Auckland thus mistakenly prophesied that his Majesty would enter his dominions surrounded by his own troops, the future character of the Shah's contingent must have been fully known. Lord Palmerston's equivocating defence is worthy of the assertion which he defends.

If, however, the Indian Government failed in surrounding Shah Soojah with Affghan troops, they proceeded effectually to fulfil their promise of supporting him with a British army. The preparations made indicated an expectation of meeting with no

inconsiderable amount of "factious opposition," and a resolution that no amount should interfere with the execution of their great project. Including the Shah's contingent, as it was called, and a few thousands of Seikh levies, the forces assembled in the early part of 1839, along the line of the Indus, amounted to more than 40,000 men.

A glance at the map will show, that from Ferozepore, the head-quarters of the Bengal division of the "Army of the Indus," the nearest line of march on Cabool would have been that by which our troops, in 1842, evacuated the country, through the Punjaub and the defiles of the Khyber. The line ultimately chosen for the Bombay and Bengal divisions—the chief strength of the army both in numbers and efficiency—was the longer western route, leading through the territory of the Ameers of Sinde, and Eastern Beloochistan, by the Bolan Pass to Quettah and Candahar. It is curious to find that a principal reason for this preference was —the reluctance of our "old and faithful ally," Runjeet Singh, to permit those who, by a reciprocal relation, must have been his "old and faithful allies," to traverse his territories with so large a force. For his scruples we had every respect; but, apparently, it is not every ruler who is entitled by his position to object to the passage of armies. The scruples of the weaker Ameers of Sinde, and of the Khan of Khelât, the principal chieftain of Eastern Beloochistan, though not less natural, were less complacently regarded. The former, who had previously

been induced to promise supplies, assistance, and carriage, were, on our arrival in their country, found to regard the advance of the army with hostile feelings, which were more than shared by the fierce Beloochee tribes who acknowledged their dominion. It was even said that large sums of money were distributed by them among their undisciplined followers, assembled in thousands along the Indus, to *prevent* their attacking the British army. For a time they hesitated to subscribe the new treaty tendered for their acceptance, large as it was in its demands, and equivalent to a renunciation of independence. At length, under immediate apprehension of an attack upon their capital by 20,000 men, they agreed to all that was required of them, including the payment of a large sum to Shah Soojah, once their feudal superior; they admitted an English force to be permanently established in their country, and became the dependent and tributary allies of the Indian Government. Ten months before this time occurred that conversation between Captain Burnes and Dost Mahomed, in which "I referred him to Sinde as an example of the advantages of British connexion;" five years later that connexion reached its climax, in perhaps the fiercest battle ever fought in India, resulting in the captivity of the princes of the land, the occupation of its capital, and its permanent annexation to our empire.

On the subject of our dealings with Sinde, in 1839, we have read Captain Havelock with painful astonishment. That officer, who "records, not with-

out a sentiment of national shame and humiliation," that our original demand on the Ameers was in direct violation of a treaty entered into with them only a few years earlier, who styles that demand "an expression of calm contempt on the part of the British, for subsisting engagements," yet afterwards "ventures to think, that, after all, these deceitful rulers were dealt with too leniently," and speaks of the anticipated storm and plunder of Hyderabad, and the "blasted hopes" of the army, in consequence of a peaceful arrangement, in the spirit of a disappointed Mahratta plunderer. We solemnly assure our readers that the page in Captain Havelock's work, which anticipates the storm of Hyderabad, is headed "Golden Prospects," that the page which records how Hyderabad came *not* to be stormed, is headed "Prospects Blighted;" that each page is like to its heading, and that we have been able to discover no trace of irony. Is this the natural tone of a British officer? or is it the case that injustice on the part of rulers leavens the whole mass of those whom they employ with a corresponding leaven of iniquity?

After passing through Sinde, the route followed by our army led them through the parts of Eastern Beloochistan, subject to *Mehrab Khan of Khelât*—a name of deep significance to the student of the Affghan war. That chieftain, or his predecessors, had been, like the Ameers of Sinde, feudatory to the crown of Cabool, but for the last many years had possessed, like them, a virtual independence. In 1834, Shah Soojah, flying from the consequences of

a defeated attempt to recover his dominions, took refuge in the territories of Mehrab Khan, of whom he was demanded by his pursuer, one of the Barukzye chieftains of Candahar. Mehrab Khan had the generosity to refuse to give up the fugitive, and the Barukzye the generosity to applaud the refusal, saying, that "Mehrab Khan acted like a good man." Shah Soojah had now an opportunity of showing his gratitude to the man to whom he was perhaps indebted for liberty and life, and he did so characteristically. On understanding that Mehrab Khan demurred to the passage of the army, he wrote to him, reminding him that *Shah Nawaz Khan* was now in his camp; this Shah Nawaz Khan being a shoot of the ruling family of Khelât, and a legitimate pretender, with pretensions about one hundred years old, to the throne; whom the English afterwards actually set up on the death of Mehrab Khan, and maintained for a few months. In any estimate of the character of our *protégé*, Shah Soojah, this incident ought not to be forgotten.

Sir Alexander Burnes, who was more than once at Khelât for the purpose of conducting the negotiation for the supply of provisions and carriage with Mehrab Khan, has recorded some of his conversations with the chieftain. The Khan's remarks upon the dangerous impolicy of our conduct, by which, though we might set up Shah Soojah, "we could never win over the Affghan nation," indicate far more judgment and shrewdness than he receives credit for from Mr. Masson, who considers him an imprudent,

though by no means treacherous, character. Once he is said to have used words of ominous prophecy: "You have brought an army into this country, but how do you propose to take it out again?" Ultimately, after showing much reluctance, Mehrab, as the historian of the *Bombay Times* says, "promised plentifully, as most Oriental and many European princes, under these circumstances, would have done; trusting that the chapter of accidents would enable him to evade, or release him from a treaty which was acceded to under fear or constraint."

As might have been expected, these promises were little regarded; probably it would not have been in Mehrab Khan's power to perform them, whatever had been his intention. But the distress of the army, in consequence of their non-performance, seems to have been fearful; even before the main division of Bengal, estimated, with the camp followers, at little short of 100,000 men, entered the tremendous pass of the Bolan, the non-combatants were reduced to half-rations. A vivid idea of the nature of the march may be gained from Dr. Atkinson's sketches of the scenery of this pass; the deep and narrow split in the hills, where the precipitous cliffs, inclining towards each other as they run up, and nearly meeting at top,

Forehead to forehead hold their monstrous horns.

Half-way up, a wild group of Beloochees are perched in a cleft, peering and pointing their matchlocks over the ledge at the invading column; some adventurous sepoys are scrambling up the rocks to

some "coin of vantage" from which to assail the plunderers; while the long line of march, men, horses, and laden camels, is toiling on painfully below. During the advance of seventy miles along that terrible chasm, their losses in baggage and provisions were great, owing to the difficulties of the route even more than to such predatory attacks; and the Bombay column, when following some weeks later, found the track marked by the dead bodies of horses, camels, and *marauding Beloochees*, who were invariably dealt with according to the order that "no prisoners were to be taken." Yet they were never attacked in force.

An intercepted letter to a hill chief, written, whether by Mehrab Khan, or as Mr. Masson thinks, by his treacherous minister without his knowledge, contains the following expressions:—"What is the use of your treaties and your arrangements? all child's play. There is no relief but in death: no cure but in the destruction of the English. Their heads, goods, and bodies must be sacrificed. Strengthen the Pass. Call on all the tribes to harass and destroy." Had this fierce but not unwise counsel been heartily followed; had Mehrab Khan combined with the chiefs of Candahar for the purpose of resolutely opposing the advance of the English, there seems no slight probability that the invasion of Affghanistan might have terminated short of the frontier of that country. But the retribution which perhaps but for the disunion of our enemies, might have signalized the Pass of the Bolan, was deferred until it

should be better merited;

> Until a day more dark and drear,
> And a more memorable year

should give to Khoord Cabool and Tezeen the fame of the slaughter of an English army.

Between Quettah and Candahar, shortly before entering the Kojuk Pass, the danger—not from the sword, but from starvation—was great. The camp followers were in a state bordering on famine; the men were dispirited, and desponding; speculations upon the necessity of a retreat were prevalent in the camp; but were put an end to by the spirited and judicious order of the Commander-in-chief, directing an immediate advance. Still beset by attacks rather on their baggage and stores than themselves, losing very few men by the sword, but many by sickness and exhaustion, having had many horses shot to preserve them from dying by starvation, and almost all the rest unfit for duty, the harassed, half-famished, and diminished column struggled on to Candahar. The Barukzye chiefs of Candahar, deterred from resistance by the treacherous desertion of one of their most influential adherents, fled at the approach of the British army, and Shah Soojah entered unopposed into the second city of his dominions, where he was apparently well received—flowers and loaves of bread being strewed before him by his loving subjects; the latter of which demonstrations of respect would have been more to the purpose in the course of the march through the passes. He proceeded to constitute a court, hold levées, and perform

other similarly important functions of sovereignty. For all such formalities he seems to have had a strong taste, diametrically opposed to the prejudices and principles of his Affghan subjects, accustomed to feel pride in the rude freedom and social equality which existed under the half-patriarchal, half-feudal, government of their chieftains. On the plain outside the city, surrounded by English officers, amid the roar of English cannon, he was solemnly recognised as sovereign of Affghanistan. The whole ceremony was conducted according to theatric programme, assigning to every one his place; and, among others, a place to the "populace," whose exuberant loyalty was to be "restrained" by the Shah's troops. The performance went off well; but the part of Hamlet was omitted—the people were not there.

Advancing, after two months' delay, from Candahar, and still exposed to similar privations, the army arrived at length before the fortified city of Ghuznee in a state in which failure would have been most dangerous, and success was almost necessary. Such situations are not unfrequent in war; and as the die falls, there is blame for the imprudence which risked and lost—or all praise for the courage which risked and won. "I know," said Napoleon, after hearing and answering the objections of some of his generals to his proposed scheme for the world-dividing campaign of 1813, "I know, after all, I shall be judged by the event." But the swift decision to try, and the resolution to win, which have never a small share in determining the event, determined that of

the Ghuznee campaign of 1839. The battering train had been left at Candahar; the defences of the town were strong; but *one* gate, out of twenty-four, had not been walled up; and the scheme suggested by an engineer officer was instantly adopted by the general —to blow in this gate with powder, and carry the town by storm. All was done as it was arranged. On the 21st of July the garrison of Ghuznee first saw from their walls the colours of an English regiment; by five o'clock A.M. on the 23rd, those colours were floating from the citadel.

Nothing can be more picturesque, nothing, as an exhibition of determined valour, apart from all considerations of the cause in which it was shown, more brilliant than that assault, as told in the official despatches, and the accounts of those who were present. The stormy night, the violent gusts of wind preventing the garrison from hearing the approach of our columns; the enemy, seen through the chinks of the gate, quietly smoking, immediately before the explosion in which they were buried; the storming party, under Colonel Dennie, struggling through the half-ruined gateway, at once feeling and fighting their way forward through the covered passage in the dark, until their leader saw the blue sky and stars above the heads of their retiring opponents;—all these circumstances belong to the romance of war. According to the account of Colonel Dennie, confirmed from other quarters, an unavoidable mistake prevented the storming party from being immediately followed by the supporting column, of which the

advance was delayed for some minutes; and Dennie and his small band forced their way into the town, and held their position there on the ramparts within, for some time, unsupported and alone.

"Alone I did it." He was the Coriolanus of Ghuznee.

This exploit, in fact, decided the struggle, and Shah Soojah might now consider himself, by the grace of the English, king of Affghanistan. We find him "every inch a king," taking, and which is much stranger, receiving in Lord Keane's despatch, ostentatious credit for sparing the life of the "rebel" governor of Ghuznee, Prince Hyder Khan, son of Dost Mahomed; "as if," says Dr. Kennedy, with just indignation, "the bare possibility of the contrary could have been contemplated." The day previous he had begun to exercise in a yet more decided manner the rights of sovereignty. Fifty or sixty Affghan prisoners (*prisoners of war*) had been taken and brought before him. His Majesty, who appears to have been fond of using strong language, began to storm at the rebels. One of them, a chief, irritated by the language addressed to him by the Shah, rushed towards him, and wounded an attendant with his dagger. The king, in the rage it would seem of a coward, instantly ordered the execution of the whole; and, in a few minutes, these fifty or sixty prisoners—again we say, *prisoners of war*—were massacred to a man.

This butchery was said at the time to have been perpetrated in the presence of the British Envoy,

and by authority of the British Commander-in-Chief. We are sincerely glad to find that this was not the case*; but that Shah Soojah was at once warned by the Commander-in-Chief that, while within the limits of a British camp, he must measure out his mercy and justice, even towards his rebellious subjects, in a different proportion. One can conceive the unmitigated disgust and scorn with which every English gentleman—every English man in the camp, must have heard of the performance of this, the first Bed of Justice, held by the imbecile old man whom they were supporting in leading-strings over the bodies of his subjects to a throne. This was the first occasion on which he acted for himself, and it appears fair to presume that it was in character.

While the army staid at Ghuznee, the Nawab Jubbar Khan, brother to Dost Mahomed (mentioned at page 62), appeared once more in the character of a peace-maker, asking for himself, nothing; for Dost Mahomed, his hereditary office of Grand Vizier, as the condition of submitting to the Shah. This, of course, could not be granted. When presented to the Shah, his deportment was not uncourteous, but his courtesy did not prevent him from addressing to the king a rather awkward question. "If you are to be king, of what use is the British army here? If the English are to rule over the country, of what use are you here?" By the ancient laws of Menu, a severe penalty is attached to the offence of over-

* History in the *Bombay Monthly Times.*

coming a Brahmin in argument; we do not know whether Affghan law attaches any penalty to bringing a king into an inextricable dilemma; but, if there is any such, we think it is pretty clear that the good Nawab had incurred it. He was offered maintenance in his property and honours, which he declined, and departed to share his brother's fortune; having first solemnly laid the responsibility of the blood which would be shed upon the *King* and the *Envoy*. At this, "one could not but smile." (Havelock.) One smiles at the time, at many things which, at the distance of three years, have a very unsmiling aspect. We will answer for it that, if Captain Havelock now recalls this conversation, the recollection does not make him smile.

A week after the capture of Ghuznee, the army advanced on Cabool, carrying with it the prestige and terror of victory. Dost Mahomed, who had shortly before 13,000 men around him, was deserted, and forced to fly with 600 horsemen to the mountains; and Shah Soojah entered Cabool, like Candahar, unopposed, and was received by the people in a manner which, we think, did them honour,—without insolence, without exultation; but with cold and grave respect.

Dost Mahomed was pursued by some sepoys and British officers under Captain Outram, and a body of Affghans under Hadji Khan of Kakur: the traitor who, having lately betrayed the Barukzye cause at Candahar, was expected to show the zeal of a convertite. This man, whose general course through life

seems to have been that of a thorough scoundrel, may yet probably have felt some reluctance to be the instrument of putting his old master into the hands of his enemies. He took every excuse for hanging back; and his efforts in this line were more than seconded by his followers. To Captain Outram's forward energy they opposed an unconquerable *vis inertiæ*; and their leader repeatedly assured him that not one of them would strike against Dost Mahomed, should they overtake him. Once Captain Outram overheard the chiefs remonstrating with the Hadji on his conduct,—"Why should he, who had never received injury from Dost Mahomed, aid in putting him into the hands of the Feringees?" To which, as might be expected, the Hadji had nothing to say. On another occasion we find him, in answer to Captain Outram's reproaches of his backwardness, protesting that he had incurred the hatred of the whole nation by his attachment to the English. "I am, *next to the king*, the most unpopular man in the country." *Next to the king*, whose universal popularity had been so incontestably proved to Lord Auckland!

The result of the pursuit was such as might have been expected. After crossing the Hindoo Koosh at 15,000 feet above the sea,—after starving for days on handfuls of meal,—after coming to a unanimous and we doubt not, very just conclusion, that in case anything went wrong, all the Affghans on both sides would at once turn against them,—and passing, in full conclave of thirteen English officers, a resolution which recalls to us the wars of Cortez with the

Mexicans, to direct their united attacks, should they come into conflict with the enemy, upon Dost Mahomed singly, whose fall would probably disperse his followers, — Captain Outram and his companions found themselves obliged to retrace their steps to Cabool; where, of course, the immediate consequence of their return was the disgrace and punishment of the "traitor," Hadji Khan. He had lately won riches and honour by betraying the Barukzye cause, and now, for favouring the escape of his old master, he was disgraced and punished. It was probably the only deed prompted by good feelings he had ever done in his life, and he did not find it answer. Doubtless, in the seclusion of his imprisonment at Loodianah, he resolved in his heart not to offend similarly again. Treason was no new game to him; but this time he had been traitor on the wrong side. It is an instructive lesson to scoundrels, to be careful, like Snake, to preserve their character, and not to disappoint their employers' estimate of their scoundrelism.

We shall not attempt to follow in detail the subsequent fortunes of Dost Mahomed. It will be sufficient to say that he strove to maintain the war against us with an honourable pertinacity; that in the course of his endeavours to obtain assistance he was imprisoned, savagely treated, and his life endangered by the ruler of Bokhara,—the same wretched tyrant who has since become infamous by the murder of our two countrymen, Colonel Stoddart and Captain Conolly; and that, escaping thence, he returned

to Affghanistan, and became once more a rallying point of the "disaffected and rebellious," and at one time a source of most serious alarm: an insurrection, even in Cabool itself, being daily apprehended; that, after sustaining a ruinous defeat at Bamean, from Colonel Dennie, in an action which, in a military point of view, was perhaps the most brilliant fought in Affghanistan,—a defeat which a slight advantage gained at Purwan Durrah seems only to have convinced him it was impossible to repair,—he rode with one attendant straight from the last-mentioned field of battle to Cabool, met Sir William Macnaghten returning with his escort from his evening ride, and claimed, with a confidence honourably given, and honourably repaid, the protection of the representative of England. The Envoy merits praise for bestowing generously and readily the kindness which it would have been disgraceful to refuse; but one regrets to find that, true to his dislike to Dost Mahomed, he continued afterwards to attribute the favourable impression which he made on all who came in contact with him, to the singular misleading powers of this "accomplished dissembler." With this chivalric incident, which occurred in November, 1840, exactly a year before the great insurrection in Cabool, closed for the time the public career of one whose name, otherwise little known beyond the limits of his own country, has now been made famous through the world; and carries with it, wherever it is spoken, a reproach to the impolicy and injustice of England.

Let us return to the course of earlier events; that is, to the autumn of 1839. Though Dost Mahomed had escaped for the time, the Indian Government had kept its word, and placed Shah Soojah on the throne of his ancestors, and a large part of the troops were at once withdrawn to India. The returning march of the Bombay army was signalized by one of the most important events of the year 1839, the capture of Khelât. We have already alluded to the causes of quarrel with the chieftain of that country. He was accused, not only of having failed in his engagements to furnish provisions, but of having incited the hill tribes to attack us in the Bolan Pass, of having waylaid the bearers of the treaty he had signed, and of other hostile proceedings. Had all that he was charged with been entirely established, we cannot but regard the resolution to depose him as a harsh, high-handed, and arbitrary proceeding. He was false, if false at all, to a compulsory agreement,—an agreement entered into, not in furtherance of his own interests, but of ours; and to whatever extent the original demand upon him may be held to be vindicated by apparent necessity, the same cause cannot be given for visiting the violation of his engagement with the very extreme of retribution, after the expedition had been perfectly successful. It would, we think, have been more consistent with policy and justice, as well as with humanity, to have accepted the excuses with which he was ready to propitiate the conquerors of Affghanistan, and to establish by future kindness some right

to those services which hitherto we had attempted to exact by terror. These considerations either did not occur to our politicians, or were disregarded by them. They had already tasted the pleasure of being "proud setters-up and pullers-down of kings," and the Commander of the Bombay column was charged in his return to effect the deposition of Mehrab Khan.

That chieftain, whatever his conduct towards us had been, seems not to have expected such a proceeding. He attempted to delay the advance of the British by professions of attachment and allegiance, coupled with the declaration that if attacked he would defend himself to the last. Professions and threats were alike unnoticed, and the British force appeared before Khelât on the 13th November. All the writers on the Affghan war bear testimony to the dashing gallantry of the assault which followed, and the determined resistance of the besieged.

The English general performed skilfully and bravely the service entrusted to him, and Mehrab Khan kept his word. Fighting to the last for the independence of his country, and for his own hereditary dominion, he died like a brave man in what was, in the main, a good cause, and the reverence of his people has not unworthily bestowed upon him and the chiefs who fell with him before the Feringee invaders, the blood-earned honour of martyrdom.

Mr. Masson, who arrived at Khelât a few months after these events, and who gives a painful picture of the depression prevailing among the inhabitants, and

the resignation with which it was borne, states that he found there but one opinion respecting the conduct of Mehrab Khan,—that he had not been guilty of the offences imputed to him against the British Government. We cannot go at length into the arguments by which Mr. Masson maintains that Mehrab Khan had not, as he was accused of doing, excited the mountain tribes against us; that this was done by others, who betrayed his confidence. That he was in the hands of traitors there can be no doubt. It is certain, that his principal agent in our camp threw every obstacle in the way of an amicable arrangement; that he was at one and the same time doing all he could by letter to excite in the Khan's mind fear and hatred against the English, and representing to us in the strongest light the hostile and faithless disposition of his employer. The first half of this treason, which was not discovered till after the death of his unfortunate master, deprived him of the reward which he had earned in the character of our partisan by the second. This man is said by Masson to have forged, without Mehrab Khan's knowledge, the intercepted letters to the tribes: and there can be no doubt that he was quite capable of doing so. His object evidently was to ensure the Khan's destruction, by leading him to commit himself with the English, and perhaps by their all-powerful assistance to procure the succession for himself. It is difficult, without fuller information, to form a positive opinion upon the question of Mehrab Khan's conduct. The fullest es-

tablishment of his guilt would be, we think, an inadequate defence for the precipitate and vindictive course of the British authorities; but if he was, in every sense, unjustly attacked, then no deed more truly lamentable than this "brilliant exploit" has ever stained the annals of England.

We must give a short summary of the rest of this Khelât episode.

The territory of the slain chief was partitioned, our pet and *protégé*, Shah Soojah, coming in for a large share. The son of Mehrab Khan, a boy of fourteen, became a fugitive and wanderer, and Nawaz Khan, the relation to whom we have before alluded, was set up in Khelât to govern the diminished dominions, as the tributary of Shah Soojah, and under the control of an English political agent. Of the individual who filled this station at his arrival, Mr. Masson has given an account, of which if one quarter be true, it is frightful to think of the amount of unchecked power over hundreds of thousands thus placed in hands which were unfit to exercise subordinate authority over a single company of soldiers, —over a single form of schoolboys.

To a dreadful incident, or rather accident, related at page 118 of his work, Mr. Masson in some degree attributes the insurrection which followed, in the summer of 1840, and which terminated in the deposition of our puppet, the imprisonment of the agent, Lieutenant Loveday, and the reinstatement of the son of the late chief, Nusseer Khan. A superior British force was speedily directed upon Khe-

lât, and Nusseer Khan again became a fugitive. In the course of his flight the British agent was murdered, but not by his orders. But the British authorities apparently began to feel the injustice of their former conduct, and, as far as it was now possible, wished to repair it. They made kind offers to the young Khan; but it was not easy to bring him to trust in the Feringees. With no unkindly intention, he was hunted like a partridge on the mountains. We recollect that the Indian newspapers of the day used to tell how, on the entrance of the English force into a valley, the young Khan and his followers would be seen escaping over the ridge of the hills, his mountain pony following him close, like a dog, and clambering over the rocks after him. At length, Colonel Stacy, the officer to whom the settlement of the country was entrusted, having ventured unattended into the fugitive camp of Nusseer Khan, confidence was won by confidence, and the young chief consented to be replaced by the English in the seat of his father. This took place in October, 1841. The portion of his dominions taken from him has since been restored by Lord Ellenborough.

It is worth observing that to this single act of justice,—the restoration of Nusseer Khan,—we may attribute the subsequent tranquillity of that country, and therefore, in all probability, a great diminution of the danger to which, a short time after Nusseer Khan's restoration, the general insurrection in Affghanistan exposed our troops at Candahar. We are glad to find one spot upon which the eye can dwell

with pleasure, in the dark history of our four years' supremacy beyond the Indus.

The Brahoes of Khelât were not the only mountaineers with whom we were discreditably and uselessly embroiled. The greater part of the year of 1840 is filled up with our dealings with other hill tribes, especially those bordering on Upper Sinde, to the east of the Bolan Pass; with captures of places by mistake; with seizure and release of chiefs; with unmeaning negotiations alternating with scrambling but occasionally desperate warfare. Over all these people we thought proper to assert a claim (on the Shah Soojah's behalf) to allegiance, and especially to tribute, which they, having it would appear, never paid any before, and regarding themselves as practically independent, thought proper to dispute. To follow all the details of such events would be as useless as uninteresting; a sufficiently true conception of them may be obtained from that which we give as a specimen; the series of events known as the occupation, defence, and ultimate capitulation of Kahun, far-famed, at least in India. The least of all our "little wars," this was also certainly the least successful, and perhaps the least creditable.

Kahun is the capital of the Murrees, a mountain tribe to the eastward of the Bolan Pass, and described by the *Bombay Times'* Historian as a fierce and warlike but chivalrous clan. Like most of these tribes they are included in the general term of Beloochees and deserve it by their valour: perhaps, also, by

their share in the common failing of the race,—covetousness of camels. During the year which connects them not dishonourably, through English with universal history, their chief was an old man, known by the name of Dodah Murree. That he was aware of the besetting failing of his people appears from his recorded ejaculation to them, on the occasion of their making what appeared to him an imprudent attack on an English detachment. "There you go, selling your country for five hundred camels." But if they loved camels more than their country, they yet loved their country well, and better than their lives.

In December, 1839, we entered in arms the country of these people, and of their neighbours, the Bhoogties, a kindred tribe, with objects somewhat indefinite, but centering in this;—to exact tribute not shown to be due, and to establish a supremacy never definitely acknowledged; probably also to punish some alleged depredations. The natural results followed; the leading chiefs were friendly in their professions, but the warriors left the towns and gathered in the mountains; the British commander thought it right to guard against treachery by seizing the chief of the Bhoogties, whose town, Deyrah, we then occupied; and then followed some desultory warfare, terminated chiefly by the terror of our artillery. The chief was sent captive to Sukkur, effectually guarded by the threat that he would be shot on the first attempt at rescue; and the detachment marched from Deyrah to Kahun, which it found deserted; and thence to the plains, by a road made with immense labour through

the tremendous pass of Nufoosk; a course taken expressly with the view of showing the Murrees that their mountains were no defence against our skill and energy. They learnt the lesson differently.

This expedition had terminated in a successful forage for plunder, but not in securing allegiance or tribute; it left among the Murrees a determined spirit of resistance, and a scornful distrust of our professions. It is painful to find that these people perpetually charged us with treachery and disregard of our plighted word. It is certain from subsequent events, that they at least well knew the difference between falsehood and truth. Such, however, as its results were, they did not deter the political authority in Upper Sinde from sending in the following April (1840), a force under Captain Brown, to occupy Kahun. He had from 300 to 400 troops, a considerable force for such a country, supplies for four months, a most tempting convoy of camels, and—a native tax-gatherer, who found, in the sequel, little opportunity for exercising his vocation. They were sent to seek wool from a wolf; and, though their shears were sharp, the shearers verified the proverb. Never did seekers of a golden fleece come home more closely shorn.

After an almost unopposed, but most toilsome and painful march, in which the "wind came down the gorges like the breath of a furnace," the detachment surmounted the pass of Nufoosk and entered Kahun, about four or five miles further, which they found again deserted. It was hastily put in a state

of defence; the camels were unloaded, and on the 16th of May, more than half the force, in charge of a convoy of 500 camels, left Kahun to return to the plains. Lieutenant Clarke, an officer of distinguished spirit and talent, was in command. Having crossed the first hill from Kahun, and apparently apprehending little opposition, he directed eighty men to return to the fort. This party was, on its way back, attacked, and entirely destroyed, one man only escaping back to Kahun. Lieutenant Clarke had marched some miles further unmolested, when he saw himself followed by a strong body of Murrees. He had two miles of camels to guard over forty miles of difficult ground; and he judged it best to turn on his followers. An unlucky accident deprived his party of ammunition; the Murrees observed their fire slacken, rushed in upon them, sword in hand, and the infantry were cut to pieces after a desperate resistance. The horsemen alone escaped to the plains; the whole convoy fell into the hands of the tribes; 500 camels at once. This little war with wild mountaineers had already cost a single native regiment 148 men in one day.

Thus was an English force, now reduced to 140 soldiers, established at Kahun, or rather imprisoned there. We are not told what became of the tax-gatherer; but he must have felt that his occupation was hopelessly gone. It was much if they could maintain themselves with 900 yards of wall to guard against an active and swarming enemy; who, though generally kept at some distance by the fear of the

shells, were perpetually on the watch to cut off stragglers, and prevent the entrance of supplies. The place was strengthened, the rations reduced as low as possible, forays, occasionally successful, made on the neighbouring flocks, the camp-followers drilled and armed—with sticks, when nothing better could be obtained. But months went on and over, provisions became scarcer and scarcer, sickness made its appearance in the garrison; and the situation of Captain Brown, whose skill and resolution had excited throughout India great interest in his behalf, was justly regarded as in the last degree critical.

In August, the garrison heard that a strong force was to be sent to their relief, and that the Murrees were assembling with the vowed resolution of opposing it to the last. On the 30th, they saw the hills commanding the Pass of Nufoosk alive with men, and later, with signal fires. At sunrise, on the 31st, they heard from the other side of the pass a single gun, the concerted signal to announce the approach of the convoy. No wonder that the day should have been, as Captain Brown's Journal tells us, one of the most intense and painful excitement for the garrison. Unable, without certain destruction, to leave the walls of the fort, they heard heavy firing; they saw the Murrees hurrying in all directions to the scene of action; they saw the shells flying over the ridge, and bursting among them; they expected, hour after hour, to see the top of the pass crowned with the glitter of bayonets. But the

firing ceased, was renewed, and finally ceased again; before the night came on, all was quiet, and still they had seen nothing and received no intelligence of the convoy. For many days after they could only conjecture their fate. They saw, indeed, many camels crossing the plain; they saw the Murrees erecting tents, which they tried to persuade themselves belonged to the party formerly cut off; they thought it possible that the convoy, finding the Pass of Nufoosk too strong, had been obliged to go round by a longer and easier route; they anticipated disaster, but not such disaster as had in truth befallen. At length, eight days after the fight, Captain Brown discovered with his glass, close to the Murree camp, and pointed towards the fort, "the three guns belonging to the convoy, staring us in the face!" Luckily they were not likely to be very harmful; for as Captain Brown says, after some other good reasons, "*lastly*, they know not how to load or fire them. All the Beloochees are assembled round the guns, and peeping into their muzzles; *quite playthings to them.*" "What can have become of Major Clibborn and his convoy? Many officers and men must have lost their lives before they gave up the guns!" The brave soldier judged rightly.

Major Clibborn led from Sukkur to the Pass of Nufoosk a force of 850 men and 3 guns: one-third of the numbers which were requisite to win, against 22,000 of the bravest of Asiatics, the terrible battle of Meeanee; a considerable force therefore against tribes which could muster only a few thousand war-

riors. They found the heights strongly occupied by the enemy, and the road broken up; the advance however, struggled over these obstacles, and was, through a heavy fire, and showers of stone from the precipices, nearing the top of the gorge. "One sepoy reached the gap, and was seen to fire through it," when the mountaineers rushed on them, sword in hand, "shouting and yelling like fiends." No discipline could resist the fury of their attack: all the officers and half the men fell on the spot, and the advance, fighting desperately all the way, mixed hand to hand with the enemy, was driven by main force to the bottom of the hill, and back on the main body. The troops were scarcely rallied, when the Murrees made repeated and desperate charges on them, rushing up to the very muzzles of the guns; but were at last repelled by showers of grape-shot.

The severe loss and exhaustion of the detachment would probably have made another attempt on the pass of doubtful result; the want of water, of which none could be discovered in the neighbourhood, rendered it impossible. They retreated that night, and reached the plains utterly exhausted, with the loss of nearly one-third of their force, having left in the hands of the Murrees, baggage, ammunition, camels without end, and those guns which became the heralds of their fate to Captain Brown.

The victory, for such it was, of Nufoosk, was decisive; and that officer was now desired to make such terms as he could for himself. He sent to old Dodah the following epistle: a model, barring the flourish

about the provisions, of straight-forward diplomacy: "Dodah Murree, I'll give you back your fort on conditions, viz., that you give me personal security for my safe arrival in the plains: if not, I will remain here two months longer, having provisions for that time:"—terms which the Murree chief had offered before, to be marked in Captain Brown's journal with a scornful note of admiration, but which he frankly and at once accepted now, and adhered to with perfect fidelity. The garrison, weak with disease and short rations, left the fort where they had been shut up for five months, and arrived exhausted but safely at the plains. In the course of this march one of the sick having been left behind for want of carriage, their Murree guide went back for him, mounted him on his own horse, and brought him safe into camp, himself walking at his side.

We had now had enough of the Murrees; perhaps their generous and honest behaviour may have had its share in awakening our authorities to a sense of their wickedness and folly. We released the chiefs we had captured, treacherously as they said, and made peace with the hill men, on the simple terms of henceforth mutually letting each other alone; of tribute, we need hardly say, no more was heard. And so the war between England and the Murrees being over, the latter disappear from history; where they have, however, played a part not unlike that which made the early glory of Greece and of Switzerland. In some mosque among their hills stand the guns taken in fair battle from an English com-

mander,—trophies which are not to be seen in every European capital.

Our share from the transaction between us, is, the reproach of unprovoked aggression: theirs the sympathy which all men feel for simple and generous manhood. A braver people never maintained their freedom with the sword.

To return to the affairs of Cabool. One of Shah Soojah's first steps on his restoration, was to institute what was called the "Order of the Douraunee Empire;" and if our readers wish for a laugh, in the midst of serious matters, they may read Dr. Kennedy's account of the institution of that burlesque upon chivalry, the most amazing absurdity, one should think, ever perpetrated under the sun;—how their decorations were successively inflicted upon the chief military and political authorities, Colonel Pottinger alone escaping—an escape, in the Doctor's opinion, only to be explained "by the unparalleled good fortune which has attended that gentleman through life;"—and how Sir John Keane, on receiving his "Grand *Cross*" from the hands of a *Mahomedan* sovereign, made a long speech "about hurling a usurper from the throne." Well, allowance must be made for the infirmity of human nature, when a speech is expected of it; and Sir John Keane, in 1839, had done something. But we have felt surprise, and something more than surprise, to see it solemnly announced in 1843, that —— —— has applied for, and received, gracious permission to wear

the insignia of some class or other of the Order of the Douraunee Empire. *Flebile ludibrium!* The Order of the Douraunee Empire! Where is the Douraunee Empire? Buried in the bloody defiles of Khoord Cabool and Jugdulluk! Like a straw on the top of a flood which has swept away bridges and buildings, this miserable Order comes floating by. Let us cease, in common sense, to exhibit with pride a memorial of miserable and unparalleled disasters, which could only be worn rationally as a mark of penance.

The memoir-writers of the campaign give us but little from which to judge of the general state and government of the country during the two years, from the autumn of 1839 to November 1841, of Shah Soojah's precarious dominion. The real ruler of the country, of course, was Sir W. Macnaghten —the "lord sahib," as the insurgents at Khelât styled him, refusing with contempt, to hold any communication with the puppet set up by the Feringees, but willing to write to the "lord sahib." We should be glad to believe that his government was, in any material respect, wise or beneficial to the country. In the *Asiatic Journal*, for October and November, 1842, we find a letter, written by Sir Alexander Burnes, in August, 1840, descriptive of the then state of the country, with remarks upon it by Sir William Macnaghten. The following appears to us a very singular instance of unwisdom. Sir Alexander Burnes has represented, among many other sources of danger, the unpopularity arising from the presence of "A body of Seikhs, in the

costume of their country, as the king's guard in this Mahometan capital. A few evenings ago, I was saluted by several of them with the Seikh war-cry, in the very streets of Cabool. I assert, without fear of contradiction, that no Seikh ever durst, in the time of the Affghan monarch, appear thus in the city; and further assert, that their presence here *is odious to the people, and to the last degree injurious.*"

Could there be a doubt of it? A guard of Prussians, or English, in the year succeeding Waterloo, would have added something, we think, to the French hatred of the Bourbons; something to the difficulties of their difficult position. Conceive Talleyrand meeting a representation of the danger which might arise from such a circumstance, with a truism to the effect that "surely it was not desirable to perpetuate this exclusive spirit!" Such, however, is the remark of Sir W. Macnaghten upon the statement of Sir Alexander Burnes.

That a statesman, sitting in Cabool, a city of 60,000 inhabitants, every house of which might, on provocation, turn out an armed warrior,—with the hot ashes of insurrection smouldering beneath his very feet, and in different parts of the country the unextinguished fire still burning,—holding by such a tenure the security of the empire he had only just begun to organize, the lives of thousands and his own,—should receive a representation of the danger of offending, in the tenderest point, the prejudices of a fierce and exasperated people, and put it aside with a clap-trap of the platform!

A conqueror, who renounces the harmlessness of the dove, should at least try to have a little more of the wisdom of the serpent. "Surely it is time that this exclusive spirit should cease"—not a doubt of it. It was time—it is always time that any evil should cease, if it can. Was it, therefore, wise to hold up before the eyes of the Affghans a perpetual memorial of their conquest? to take pains to make them connect us, and our king, with a people whom they hated? The encouraged presence of Seikh soldiers in Cabool, felt, as it would be, as an insult, may perhaps have been a heavy item in the long account between the people of Cabool and the Envoy.

"The great error of Sir William Macnaghten," says the Edinburgh Reviewer, from whom we have already quoted, "appears to us to have been the attempt to bestow too soon, and without sufficient means of coercing those who had hitherto lived at the expense of their weaker neighbours, the unappreciated blessings of an organized and powerful government upon the people of Affghanistan."

It might have been so. We know how much injustice, how much tyranny has been perpetrated, under the pretence—sometimes with the sincere hope—of improvement, even when the improvers were countrymen of those whose institutions they undertook to reform. It might perhaps have been, in the opinions of some, a good deed to bring the Affghans to exchange for the tranquillity of despotism, their fierce, struggling, ill-regulated freedom. It is doubtful whether the Affghans would have

received with gratitude even good government at our hands; but it is still more doubtful whether good government was offered them. We find, in this same letter of Sir Alexander Burnes, the Shah's chief minister dragging the peasantry from their homes in hundreds, at seed-time, to labour without pay; unpaid troops demanding their arrears of this same minister, with the threat of cutting off his nose! and receiving it accordingly;—the population of districts driven to the hills by the demand of obsolete taxes—a chief employed in the collection of tribute, living at free quarters in the country, for five months, with 1800 men. Sir William Macnaghten, denying none of the charges, replies that these things were old abuses, and could not be altered at once; he does not notice Sir Alexander Burnes's remark, that we, backing this infinite misgovernment with resistless power, enabled Shah Soojah to do these things to any extent with impunity.

In one respect, our conduct seems to have been marked with singular and obvious impolicy; we mean the encouragement which we appear to have given to Shah Soojah's childish passion for form and ceremony. Courteous, though formal and strict in his adherence to etiquette, towards English officers, to his own subjects he was difficult of access, haughty, and cold. His sense of his own unapproachable dignity, his contempt for all meaner men, appears to have been rooted in him like a principle. During his march into Affghanistan, with his kingdom yet to win, he received every adherent who presented

himself with a manner cold and repulsive even to rudeness. His actual possession of power did not increase his condescension. His friends left his presence with chilled affection: his enemies, fresh from the compulsory oath of allegiance, swore a sincerer oath to devote their lives and fortunes to his destruction*. In the course of the last struggle at Cabool, with his throne and life at stake, he clung with the tenacity of insanity to his royal state; when the chiefs offered him their allegiance on two conditions, that of intermarrying his daughters with them, and of relinquishing the practice of keeping them waiting at his gate for hours before his levées, ("The Affghans," says Lieutenant Eyre, "hate ceremony,") he gave a most reluctant consent, which he afterwards withdrew.

It is evident that the king was upheld in this tone by the profound and almost ludicrously affected respect shown to him by the English. In the works of the writers already noticed, and still more in the despatches of Sir John Keane and the Envoy, "his Majesty Shah Soojah-ool-Moolkh" is introduced with a pompous flourish of reverence, "his gracious commands" are received with a solemn and deferential gravity, obviously acted and over-acted. In all probability, the fiction was seen through by the Affghans, though not by the unhappy king himself; but at any rate it is clear that this course, adopted as a profound piece of state-craft, was the very madness of impolicy. It was, in fact, doing our best to pro-

* Atkinson, p. 343.

voke, where sufficient provocation was quite certain to be given at any rate. Such conduct would have made any king unpopular; but what must it have been in a king, who could hardly be popular at any rate—a king restored and supported by foreigners? The Affghans hated us; but for the golden image whom we had set up for them to worship, him they hated and despised.

"The surrender of Dost Mahomed," said Sir Alexander Burnes, "has made the country as quiet as Vesuvius after an eruption: how long it will continue so, God only knows." One thing was certain, that it could not continue so for ever. The country hardly ever was quite pacified. As in a volcanic country, new craters were perpetually forming—till at length, at Cabool, came the great outbreak of the central volcano.

We agree with Lieutenant Eyre's editor, in opposition to the Edinburgh Reviewer, that that outbreak was, to a certain extent, prepared and organized. There is no other way of explaining the simultaneous occurrence of insurrection in different parts of the country, and the warnings we received; nor can we see the difficulty which, in the opinion of the Reviewer, attaches to the formation of such a conspiracy. It needs no very refined organization to combine men who are already united by the freemasonry of a common hatred. Those who plotted the outbreak on a particular day may have been few in number; they knew that, on the first glimpse of success, thousands were ready to follow their lead.

Leaders were not wanting, who had never acknowledged the existing government—such as the chiefs of Nijrow in Kohistan. "Since our first occupation of Cabool," says Lieutenant Eyre, "Nijrow had become a resort for all such restless and discontented characters, as had rendered themselves obnoxious to the existing government." These men, it seems, were guilty of "hatching against the state treasonable designs." Among them were such as "Meer Musjeedee, a contumacious rebel against the Shah's authority, who, obstinately refusing to make his submission even upon the most favourable terms, openly put himself at the head of a powerful and well-organized party, with the avowed intention of expelling the Feringees and overturning the existing government."

Contumacious rebellion . . . treasonable designs . . . No, no, Lieutenant Eyre. To call these men *rebels*, and their designs *treasonable*, was excusable in November, 1841; it was then your "*métier d'etre royaliste*," on behalf of the king whom you were sent there to protect. But it is not so that Englishmen generally will speak of them, even in 1843. The chiefs of Nijrow are in respectable company.

What want these outlaws, *patriots* should have?

There was once a contumacious rebel called Wallace, who was hanged, drawn, and quartered for his treasonable designs. There was once a contumacious rebel called Kosciusko, whose treasonable designs, though unsuccessful, were only visited with life-long exile. There were, between thirty and forty years since, a great number of contumacious rebels in

Spain, whose treason prospered, and so became no treason. As history judges the Scotchmen of the 14th century, the Poles of the 18th, the Spaniards of 1808, so will she judge the Affghan chiefs, who never acknowledged, and ultimately overthrew, the king set up by the Feringees.

The first three pages of Lady Sale's journal, dated September, 1841, are most significant of the then state of things. It seems that "a chief, contemptuously designated as a robber"—that is, we presume, an outlaw in arms against the existing government,—appeared in a town where he had no right to appear: that, consequently, a force was sent to apprehend him, who were "fired upon from six forts," whether with any result is not stated. Hereupon, a larger force is sent, who reach a pass where (in September) there was snow, and bitter cold. Beyond this pass the people of the country had fled, abandoning their property, and "their suffering must be severe in the approaching winter." The chiefs are all submission; but the orders were "peremptory to destroy the forts which had fired upon the Shah's troops." Akram Khan—we presume the chief above mentioned—is caught, and then we find "the Shah has ordered Akram Khan's execution." Meanwhile, the usual payment to certain chiefs has been discontinued, an act not only impolitic, but bordering upon direct dishonesty: and so, at last, there is a "pretty general insurrection" in Kohistan, Cabool itself is discontented, and "all the country about Tezeen and

Bhoodkak in a state of revolt. It is only wonderful that this did not take place sooner." So think we.

The desperate opposition through which, from this time (October, 1841,) General Sale had to fight his way from Cabool to Jellalabad—the assistance given to his assailants, the Eastern Ghilzies, by bodies of men from Cabool itself—the insults and attacks upon individual officers in and near the city, —all these circumstances, detailed as we find them in Lady Sale's or Lieutenant Eyre's works, force us, judging it is true after the event, but with every allowance we can make, to regard the supineness of the political authorities at Cabool as something perfectly wonderful. As Mirabeau said of the St. Domingo planters, they were sleeping on the edge of the volcano, and its first jets were not enough to wake them. At length, in Lady Sale's Journal we come to—

"Nov. 2. This morning early, all was commotion in Cabul—the shops were plundered, and the people were all fighting."

An announcement, striking for its simplicity, evidently the real entry of the event, as it then looked, in the journal of the morning. On this "commotion" turned the fate of an army and a kingdom.

It is generally agreed, that active means at first might have repressed the insurrection: but those who had been slow to believe the existence were slow to admit the extent of the danger; nor was it from the beginning so slight as has been represented. The ball, of course, grew by rolling; but it grew with tremendous rapidity. If, on the first day, the insur-

gents were only a few hundreds, by the next they were truly formidable. Whatever the defects of the position of our force, whatever the blunders of its leaders,—and they appear to have made all that it was possible, and some that it would previously have been impossible, to anticipate—the outbreak, by which an army of 6000 disciplined troops were so immediately induced to take up a defensive position, can never have been contemptible. Every one has felt the justice of Lieutenant Eyre's remarks on the imbecility which first led to the loss, and then prevented the recapture, of the commissariat fort: and it is clear that the means which alone could enable the force to maintain its position, ought, at any risk, to have been defended or recovered; still the attempts in furtherance of these objects, ill-directed as they were, must have succeeded, had they not been met by a most active resistance, causing a very severe loss to the detachments employed. It is clear that vigorous and well-directed exertions might have resulted in safety and triumph. But it is out of our power to understand, how any one can, after reading Lieutenant Eyre's account of the first three weeks of the siege, feel justified in calling the Affghans "contemptible enemies." They may seem so to an Edinburgh Reviewer, calmly considering the numerous deficiencies of spirit and sense on our part, which were necessary to counterbalance the superiority of disciplined troops over bands of irregular warriors. Yet no Asiatic nation has successfully resisted us with forces so nearly equal. They did not seem contempt-

ible to the men, on whom, on the occasion of the storm of the Rikabashee fort, (one of the few successful operations undertaken during the siege,) they inflicted a severer loss than that sustained by the conquerors of Ghuznee or Khelât. They did not seem so to Lady Sale, when she noticed how they stood against our guns, without having any of their own; when she saw their cavalry, after receiving within a few yards the fire of our advancing columns, rush down the hill upon them—but we must give her own words:—

"My very heart leapt to my teeth as I saw the Affghans ride right through them. The onset was fearful. *They looked like a great cluster of bees*, but we beat them and drove them up again."

(That "great cluster of bees,"—the close, dark, irregular mass, hanging on the side of the hill, is a true touch of word-painting.) The terrible and disastrous defeat of Beymaroo, on the 23rd of November, brought about as it was by an unexampled combination of errors,—a determination it would seem to run all the risk possible, to improve and secure no temporary advantage,—marked, as it was, by disgraceful cowardice on the part of some of our troops, —gave rise to exhibitions of daring courage on the part of the Affghans. What are we to say of the Ghazees *, estimated by Lady Sale at no more than 150 in number, who, creeping gradually up the side

* The *Ghazees* are a sect of Mussulman fanatics; the *Ghilzies* a mountain tribe. The war against us had many of the features of a religious war. We read of Mollahs going into all the villages to swear the people to fight to the last, as in a sacred cause, against the infidels.

of the hill, charged, sword in hand, upon our square of infantry, broke it, and drove it before them? On our own side, the few Affghan "juzailchees" in our service, who stood by us to the end with a noble and extraordinary fidelity, were about the most efficient part of our army. The truth is, that the Affghans, in these conflicts for the freedom of their land, fully maintained the character which they have long possessed, and which their Rohilla descendants in India, whether as princes or mercenaries, have never forfeited, of being the bravest among the Asiatic nations. And this is not a little to say in their praise. A thoroughly brave man may, it is true, be a thoroughly wicked one; still for nations, even more than individuals, the foundation of all excellence is bravery.

It is needless to go into any detailed account of the events of the struggle. From the 2nd to the 13th November, the British forces were struggling to resume a position of superiority; from that date they met with nothing but disaster. On the 15th November Major Pottinger and Lieutenant Haughton, the former slightly, the latter desperately wounded, came into their camp with a single sepoy, the sole escaped relics of our force at Charekar, announcing by their arrival the complete success of the insurgents in the district of Kohistan. On the 22nd November, Mahomed Akbar came to aid the revolt. On the 23rd occurred the disastrous conflict of Beymaroo, in which our troops were driven into cantonments in utter rout, and saved, in Lieutenant Eyre's judgment, from complete destruction only by the

forbearance of their enemies; and, from that point to the evacuation of the cantonments, the picture is one of unvaried and increasing sadness; the hope of victory renounced, the hope of safety growing fainter, provisions becoming scarce, reinforcements impossible; lingering negotiations, alternating with despairing and unsuccessful attempts; within the camp, vacillation, famine, disease, and growing dismay; without, an enemy increasing in strength and confidence, and the worst enemy of all, the terrible winter, gradually creeping on.

In the whole painful and miserable story, as it lies before us, the most painful feature is the constant recurrence of chances of safety passively neglected, of wasted opportunities, of feats of useless valour. Never did the leaders of a victorious force display more devoted gallantry than was shown by many of the English officers at Cabool. Never in war was made so manifest the all-importance of the one directing mind. Even discipline, for once, was injurious. A body of men, less used to be commanded according to the strict rules of the service, might perhaps have been saved, and certainly could hardly have met with so utter a destruction. Had the constitution of an English force permitted it, who can doubt that the officers of the English and Indian regiments might, from among them, have furnished a Xenophon?

But it is impossible, on a contemplation of the whole series of events, not to echo the remark with which Lieutenant Eyre sums up his account of the

miserable and disastrous day of battle at Beymaroo, into which were crowded specimens of every one of the errors which, throughout, proved so fatal to us: "It seemed as if we were under the ban of Heaven." No Greek tragedy that ever was constructed bore more strongly the impress of an ever-advancing irresistible fatality—a fatality, however, working to its end, as is the case in all similar events, less through outward circumstances than through the characters of men. In the respective positions, characters, and views of the two English generals, there appears to have been a singular but unfortunate adaptation. Whatever incompleteness existed in the unfitness of the one, was filled up by the deficiencies of the other. General Elphinstone's position was, indeed, an unfortunate one for a man, to say the least, of no remarkable vigour of character. Disabled, not only by health, but by an accident on the very first day of the insurrection, from taking an active part in the duties of the defence, or from personally seeing that his orders were obeyed, General Elphinstone was still in command, still the person to whom every proposal must be referred. Dependent on others for the necessary information, it was most natural, though lamentable in its results, that he should distrust his own judgment, and exhibit much consequent indecision. He could not decide upon his own knowledge; and, as the statements of others varied, so did the General's opinion. It has been said that a council of war never fights; General Elphinstone's house, during the siege of the cantonments, was a perpetual council of war.

On the other side, General Shelton, the acting, though not the sole responsible, commander, allowed himself to be overcome by the difficulty of a position, half supreme, half subordinate. Equal in courage to any one in the army, it is clear that he shrank from an uncertain share of a divided responsibility. If Lady Sale may be trusted, he frequently declined giving any opinion on the measures proposed. One decided opinion he uniformly expressed, and that, whether right or wrong, was by a singular fatality on the only point on which the expression of such an opinion could do nothing but harm.

From the beginning, he, the officer in immediate command of the troops, expressed his opinion that they could not hold out for the winter, and advocated a retreat to Jellalabad. The Envoy,—the supreme political authority,—protested in the strongest manner against such a measure; and the General, responsible on the one hand for the sacrifice of the objects of his Government, on the other, for the safety of the army, remained wavering between them. The Envoy, in his position, and in the circumstances, was, as far as we can judge, perfectly right; still the opinion of Shelton, had it been at once acted upon,—that is, had it been that of a general in sole command,—would at least have saved the army. As things were, it had, and could have, only one effect —that of depressing yet farther the spirits of the soldiers. It is difficult to say which had the worst effect—the General's universal indecision, or Shelton's single opinion. We do not blame the latter

for holding it; we merely point out the singular combination of circumstances working together for the evil of the devoted army. Any one of these authorities, acting independently of the others, would, probably, have saved the troops.

Having elsewhere freely expressed our opinion of the conduct of the chief planner of the Affghan war, we are the more anxious to do justice to his demeanour through the greater part of the struggle in which he perished. Lieutenant Eyre's account shows him to us in a most respectable light; the spring of every exertion made by the force; the suggester of every plan; the brave adopter of a responsibility from which the military leaders shrank, and with his foresight uniformly vindicated by the favourable results of his suggestions.

He consented to treat only when forced to it; he rejected the offer of unworthy terms with becoming spirit; and his conduct throughout would have entitled him to no mean place among that order of men whose high qualities rise higher against adversity, but for one lamentable and final exception.

Our readers will generally know to what we allude. During the actual existence of a treaty between our force and the insurgents, Mahomed Akbar proposed to Sir W. Macnaghten a scheme, at once a test of his sincerity and a trap to catch him, comprising among other points, the seizure of certain other chiefs, parties to the actually existing treaty. The Envoy fell into the snare, and went forth to a conference prepared to seize men who were at peace

in reliance on his word. Treachery was met by treachery; the countermine exploded under the feet of the miner. He was himself seized, and resisting strongly, was shot by Mahomed Akbar, not, as it would seem, of previous purpose, but in the fierce passion excited by a violent personal struggle.

In Lady Sale's opinion, the Envoy's readiness to accede to the plot suggested to him by Mahomed Akbar against the other chiefs, was justified by the neglect on their part to fulfil the conditions prescribed by that treaty. In questions of strict morality, not less than in questions of speculative truth, a lady's judgment is apt to be biassed by her feelings. With every respect for the feelings which, in this case, misled Lady Sale, we must protest against her opinion. The alleged non-fulfilment of the terms of the treaty could have been honourably met in one way only—by openly declaring that it was no longer binding. To acquiesce in its continuance, and plot the seizure of men who were relying on its faith, under pretext of peaceful conference, was an act of detestable treachery, which, up to that time, at least, the Affghans had done nothing to parallel.

The arguments by which Lady Sale would justify the conduct of Sir W. Macnaghten, more than justify the counterplot against one already under his own hand convicted of treacherous intentions. The Affghans, in accordance with human nature, slurred over their own part of the transaction, which was bad enough, to dwell upon ours, which was worse, fiercely protesting that they had tried us, and found that we

were not to be trusted: and who can tell what share this miserable transaction, with the distrust which it produced among them, may have had in occasioning the subsequent faithless destruction of our army?

That either party should trust the other after what had passed was impossible, and to resume the treaty was madness. Yet the treaty—which bound us, in short, to evacuate the country, the Affghans to permit and assist us to evacuate it in safety—was resumed: resumed, too, in accordance with the all but unanimous decision of a council of war. One man only dissented—the officer who had before saved Herat from the Persians, and whose counsel gave now the only chance of saving the English army at Cabool from the Affghans. He pointed out the risk incurred by the treaty, the impropriety of binding the hands of the Indian Government, and declared that the true choice for the army lay between holding out at Cabool to the last, and at once fighting their way to Jellalabad.

It is clear, after the result, that Major Pottinger was right. The first course might still, perhaps, have been successful,—by the second, a remnant, at least, of the army might have reached Jellalabad. Allowance must be made for the errors of men placed in a situation of almost unparalleled difficulty; still it does seem inexplicable that they should have adopted the one course calculated to insure destruction. Lady Sale states, that many Affghans warned the English officers once and again, that their destruction was resolved upon, and attempted

to induce their friends to leave the camp, and remain in safety under their protection. The power of the chiefs to restrain the tribes between Cabool and Jellalabad, was at least doubtful, whatever their intentions. But the retreat was resolved upon. In Lady Sale's Journal of the melancholy desponding days at the close of December, 1841, we observe, with sad interest, the frequent and ominous entry of "snow all day."

On the 6th day of January, 1842, the force, amounting after all its losses to 4500 fighting men, with 12,000 camp-followers, moved out of the cantonments, the whole country being covered with deep snow. The march could hardly have failed to be disastrous, with whatever skill it had been conducted; but from the beginning all appears to have been mismanagement and confusion. Systematic plan for providing the troops with shelter from the bitter cold there was none. The camp-followers from the very first mixed themselves with, and delayed the march of the column. The tents, and most of the baggage, were early sacrificed; yet their progress was miserably slow. Everything depended upon a rapid advance; yet in two days the army had advanced only ten miles. The third morning found them at the mouth of the Khoord Cabool Pass, a disorganized multitude of from fourteen to sixteen thousand human beings, having as yet suffered comparatively little loss from the direct attacks of the enemy. But the two dreadful nights of frost had already paralyzed them. "Only a few hundred ser-

viceable fighting men remained." At this point they were assailed in force by the savage Ghilzies. Losing men by their fire at each step, the column pressed on through the terrible defile. At the top of the pass they halted, leaving in it, according to Lieutenant Eyre, 3000 men, having in three days completed fifteen miles, and ascended to a still colder climate than they had left behind. On this occasion it was that Lady Sale was wounded. She bears testimony to the fact, that the chiefs who escorted the European ladies through the pass, *apparently* exerted themselves to keep down the fire, which certainly endangered their lives as much as those who were under their protection. "But," she says, "I verily believe many of these persons would, individually, sacrifice themselves to rid their country of us." The implied doubt of their sincerity in attempting to stop the fire, is a terrible testimony to the strength of hatred with which we were regarded.

The next day, the fourth since leaving Cabool, was spent on the top of the Khoord Cabool, in negotiation and delay. Under the circumstances, this seems to have been sheer madness. One march more might have carried them clear of the snow. Mahomed Akbar had shown himself already either weak or unwilling to protect the force; and, in either case, whatever measure had been most prudent in itself, would have added to his ability, or increased his readiness. During this day it was that the ladies and officers (their husbands,) were made over to his

protection. The delay, therefore, may be held to have led to their safety; but it sealed the fate of the army, who must with the followers even now have amounted to more than 10,000 men, but most of them helpless, hopeless, and disabled; utterly without shelter, food, or fire; remaining day and night on the snow. The unfortunate natives of Hindostan suffered, of course, more than the English: hundreds of them were seen sitting on the snow, not sunk in the apathy of despair, but howling with pain. "More than one half of the force," writes Lady Sale, under the head of this day, "is now frost-bitten or wounded; and most of the men can scarcely put a foot to the ground."

The fifth, sixth, and seventh days of the march were one long and dreadful struggle; death from exhaustion, death from the cold, death from the merciless enemy. The way was lined with those who fell; every pass was a scene of fighting and slaughter; at every halting-place numbers were left dead or dying. The whole of the native infantry was destroyed or scattered on the fifth day, at the end of which Lieutenant Eyre computes that, since the departure from Cabool, 12,000 had perished. The frequent negotiations with Akbar and the Ghilzie chieftains for protection, had no effect, except to diminish the chance of preservation by creating delay. It was on the evening of the sixth day that Shelton and Elphinstone fell into his hands. It is impossible to refuse our tribute of admiration and praise to the resolute and noble spirit with which the

remnant of officers and men struggled forward, through the attacks of an enemy as pitiless and untiring as a pack of wolves, forcing all obstacles, melting away at each step like a snow-ball in water, yet still keeping together, never to the last yielding to the weakness of despair. When the disasters of the siege are attributed to the misconduct of the men of the 44th regiment, and the mistakes of their commander, let not the steady yet desperate heroism shown by many of the former, and uniformly by the latter, through these dreadful days, be forgotten.

We read with sad interest that much delay was occasioned by the anxiety of the men to bring on their wounded comrades, in the very last crisis of their fate, on the night of the seventh and morning of the eighth day. The miserable remnant had by this time cleared the Passes, and reached the open country, but by this time, too, their effective force was reduced to twenty muskets. Driven from the road, and forced to take up their position on a hill at Gundamuck, this fragment of an army defended themselves to the last, and were, all but three or four, destroyed there.

On the 9th of January, we believe, Sir Robert Sale received the order to evacuate Jellalabad. A few days after, a report ran through the garrison than the Cabool force was in full retreat upon them, and was being cut to pieces by the Ghilzies. On the 13th a single officer, wounded and hunted for his life almost to the very walls, rode in on a horse

that fell dead within the gates, and told the all but incredible tale of what he had seen, half incoherent from fatigue and horror. Every effort was instantly made; the country was scoured in every direction by parties of horse, and, for several nights, beacons were kept constantly burning, to guide any straggglers who might have escaped, to the friendly town. "*But none came. They were all dead. The army was annihilated**."

So fell the curtain upon one of the most terrible tragedies recorded in war. Greater numbers have perished in less time; but no similar force of civilized men was ever so utterly overwhelmed; nor can a great multitude of human beings have ever suffered more dreadful misery than was endured by those whose lingering destruction we have, following Lieutenant Eyre, faintly sketched, between the 6th and 13th of January, 1842. From the tumult in the city on the 2nd of November, to the marvellous escape of the single man out of 17,000, the whole is one of those transactions of which the beginning and end are miracles, when looked at separately from the connecting events, of which every step is most natural;—a series of transactions all tending to one end, truer to nature than fiction ever can be, yet surpassing every effort of fiction in strangeness and horror.

It is unnecessary to dwell much on the transac-

* Letter in an Indian newspaper.

tions of the rest of Affghanistan during this winter. At Candahar our supremacy was maintained, not unassailed, but unshaken. Ghuznee was taken after a stout resistance, and most of its garrison afterwards, in violation of the capitulation, massacred. The fort of Kelât-i-Ghilzie, between Candahar and Ghuznee, was attacked and defended with valour as obstinate as any minstrel has celebrated. It was on their final repulse that the Affghans left in the possession of the English a standard which, in their desperate attempt to gain a footing inside the fortification, they had three times planted in the embrasure of one of our cannon. All the world knows how Jellalabad was defended, and how it was at length restored to security by a victory which, though brilliant, cost much,—costing the life of Dennie. Many complaints of the treatment received by this officer from some of his superiors have been made, and have not, as far as we are aware, received answer, or attempt at answer, from those most interested in refuting them. We therefore hold them convicted of grievous injustice. Judging from his letters, he was, like many remarkable men, not the most tractable of subordinates. His temper was evidently quick, and impatient of injustice; his estimate of his own deserts, high; his tendency to *speak out*, inconvenient. But he appears to have been a man of a generous, self-devoting, and heroic tone of mind; of great energy and decision,—of daring and caution rightly combined,—of singular conduct and capacity in war. Those who are inte-

rested in defending the present system of promotion in the British army, can perhaps explain how such a man, after forty years' service, in the last two of which only he had the opportunity of proving what he was, died a Lieutenant-Colonel.

All the world too knows or ought to know, how General Pollock found, at Peshawur, in February, a sick and demoralized army, dispirited from repulse and losses already sustained in the attempt to relieve Jellalabad, shrinking with terror from the idea of the Affghan passes; and how in April those same troops, forcing, in spite of strong opposition, the passage which successive conquerors, down to Nadir, had been content to purchase, earned a name among men as the first army which ever carried hostile banners through the defiles of the Khyber. The army of Pollock, and the garrison they came to relieve, united on the 16th of April before Jellalabad, where they remained encamped some months. It was not until August that General Pollock advanced from Jellalabad, and General Nott from Candahar.

The occasional notices in the journals of the captives of affairs at Cabool, during this period, present a most vividly confused picture of bewildering and intricate anarchy. In the course of March or April, the unhappy king, who had made some kind of arrangement with the chiefs after our departure, was murdered in cold blood: the first, it appears, of the Suddozye race who had so died.

"Even in the wildest of their civil dissensions," says the Edinburgh Reviewer, "no member of that

family had ever been put to death in cold blood. It was regarded as sacred, as well as royal."

Our interference, then, had excited a hatred stronger than even this sacred reverence. From the time of his death, the confusion, before not inconsiderable, became worse confounded; and there is a clashing and intertwining of interests, perfectly inexplicable; every man standing up for himself—fighting for his own hand, and Chaos sitting umpire. In Lady Sale's *Journal*, written within hearing of the cannon at Cabool, we find such not unamusing passages as the following:—

"Parties run high at Cabool: Zeman Shah Khan says he will be king, Akbar ditto, Jubhar Khan the same, and Amenoollah has a similar fancy, as also Mahomed Shah Khan, and Futteh Jung the Shahzada. The troops go out daily to fight; Amenoollah's to Ben-i-shehr, and Zeman Shah Khan's to Siah Sung; they fight a little, and then retreat to their former positions. Zeman Shah Khan has been driven out of his house, and Amenoollah out of his, but have part of the town in their favour."

So things went on. There are constant notices, such as "sharp firing all day." "A grand battle is to come off on Sunday." One day we find that Zeman Shah and Akbar are allied against the rest; a few days after "we heard that Mahomed Shah was at war with Zeman Khan;" and the next day that Akbar, having taken Zeman Khan and his two sons prisoners, and taken from them their guns and treasure,—had released them again. Indeed, there is little

appearance of bitter animosity in these contests. As Lady Sale says, "they fight a little" nearly every day; but it seems to be rather with the object of trying their strength than of doing each other any great injury; it was their inconvenient and inartificial method of popular election, by universal suffrage—a shaking together of the lots against each other in the helmet, to see which would spring out. The most destructive incident recorded, is the explosion of a mine, by which Akbar blew up a great number of *his own men;* but, in spite of his blundering engineering, the most marked feature in the whole is the manner in which he, amid all this confusion, asserts an increasing and ultimately complete ascendancy. But the civil war of these "barbarians" was soon to sink into stillness before the approach of civilized invasion.

One thing is now clear; that the evacuation of Affghanistan was resolved upon by *both* Governments of India, Lord Auckland's as well as Lord Ellenborough's. One statesman was hardy enough to protest against the measure. One statesman only: shall we call him *Justum et tenacem propositi virum?* No,—injustice like justice is often tenacious of its purpose: like that,

> Si fractus illabatur orbis
> Impavidum ferient ruinæ.

There are men who, when the thunderbolt has shattered it over their heads, will set to work with a conscientious perseverance to rebuild the fallen fabric

of evil. When the time shall come for summing up that statesman's services to his country, it should not be forgotten that Lord Palmerston earnestly, warningly protested against the withdrawal of our army from our *conquest* of Affghanistan.

But if Affghanistan was to be evacuated, we have to answer the question, for what purpose was the campaign of 1842 undertaken? For the recovery of the prisoners? for the politic object of re-establishing the shaken opinion of our military strength? or for revenge?

If necessarily undertaken for the former purpose, it was a duty—a duty which, had our original invasion been more iniquitous than it was, we were still, before God and man, bound to fulfil,—a duty, the neglect of which would have been a worse crime than the most unjust invasion. The Indian Government would have been guilty of cowardly treason, had it abandoned those whose position was the result of their faithful obedience to its orders, so long as it had a soldier to send to battle against the Affghans, a rupee in its treasury. We should have thought it would have been unnecessary to say this, had there not appeared in some quarters the attempt to insinuate a counter opinion,—that, if the original war was unjust, to continue it, even for the recovery of our countrymen and countrywomen, was unjust also; but it is, at any rate, unnecessary to do more than say it. We cannot stop to argue a point so evident.

But was the campaign of 1842 necessary for the recovery of the prisoners? On this point there have

been many contradictory statements, as well as diverse opinions.

It is well known that, during the first part of the summer of 1842, negotiations for a mutual exchange of prisoners were constantly occurring. It is now positively stated* that arrangements to that effect had actually been made, Akbar Khan engaging not only to restore the prisoners in his immediate charge, but to collect the sepoys scattered over the country, and escort them through the passes; the condition being, that the Affghan prisoners in India should be released, and the English withdraw altogether from the country; and that, on the reception of direct orders from the Government, these arrangements were broken off and hostilities recommenced; upon hearing which, Mahomed Akbar exclaimed, in fierce anger, that "every Affghan chief had been taught to lie and break faith by the Feringees!"

On this subject, we would direct attention to a letter from General Pollock, to the Secretary of the Governor-general, quoted from the Parliamentary Papers at page 394 in the Appendix to Lieutenant Eyre's Journal. It seems to prove that General Pollock's breaking off the negotiations arose, not from any orders he might have received, but from distrust of the sincerity of Mahomed Akbar. A positive engagement to withdraw would, he thought, lead to delay on Akbar's part in the restoration of the prisoners; and our advance be likely to accelerate

* *Bombay Times*, April, 1843.

it. It is clear that the British general treated, as a man treats with another in whom he does not confide, anxious to avoid giving his opponent an advantage by binding himself to anything. General Pollock, therefore, appears to have considered the advance on Cabool desirable, if not necessary, for the sake of the prisoners.

The second object, that of re-attaching to our arms the reputation of invincible strength, by a victorious march over the scene of our late disasters, was one which the Indian Government had, naturally, much at heart; and until a more generous or more exact morality regulates the transactions of nations, it may perhaps be held that the bloody, though not unprovoked, perfidy of the Affghans left us free to take the course recommended by consideration for the future peace and general interests of our Indian empire.

On the other hand, Mahomed Akbar, fully conscious of the hold on the British Government which he derived from the possession of the prisoners, was not in any way blamable for the refusal to restore them till assured of the conditions. It appears, however, from much concurrent testimony, that he entered into the negotiation honestly, with a sincere readiness to restore them on such assurance; that the sudden rupture of the negotiations not unnaturally impressed him with the belief that he had been merely played with; and that the advance of our army, under such circumstances, exposed the prisoners to great peril. Though no actual engagement

had been broken, Akbar had been at least deliberately led to form expectations which it was never (as he at least must have thought) intended to fulfil; and had he been the *fiend,* which many in and out of India thought him, the most terrible results might have followed.

Lieutenant Eyre remarks, that

"This negotiation * * * * seemed now, by the sudden turn that had taken place, likely to plunge us into a dangerous dilemma; Mahomed Akbar being notorious for stopping at no atrocity, when his angry passions were once aroused, as we knew they soon would be, when he should hear of the advance of both generals, with their overwhelming forces."

His angry passions *were* roused, and not without reason—yet he perpetrated no atrocity. He withdrew the prisoners from the neighbourhood of Cabool, and headed the resistance to the invaders.

From the south and from the east, from Candahar and from Jellalabad, the English armies moved simultaneously on Cabool, scattering before them an energetic but uncombined opposition.

The army of Candahar having twice overthrown in the neighbourhood of Ghuznee an enemy who "advanced to meet them in the most bold and gallant manner*;" occupied that fortress without further resistance; destroyed its citadel, the scene of treacherous cruelty in the preceding winter, and carried off the well-known gates and mace, trophies

* General Nott's Dispatch.

of conquest from the tomb of one who in his day was a conqueror too.

General Pollock's army advanced through a succession of fierce but desultory attacks, treading a road strewed with the unburied slain of January, many of them yet recognisable by their comrades, by the hill of Gundamuck, where the vultures had not ceased to feed, by the gorge of Jugdulluk "choked with dead bodies," by its barricade "literally covered with skeletons;" till at Tezeen they met and utterly defeated the resistance, described in the dispatches as most obstinate, of the main force assembled under Mahomed Akbar; and marched thenceforward unopposed through the savage Khoord Cabool, the strongest of all the passes, the thickest piled with slain; where Mahomed Akbar, till overruled by less prudent counsel, had planned and prepared to make his final stand. The victorious armies met at Cabool on the 17th September: the English flag waved once again on the Bala Hissar; and under its shadow a son of Shah Soojah's seated himself on the vacant throne, identifying the Suddozyes to the last with the invaders of Affghanistan, that he might enjoy the name of royalty so long as the pressure of foreign invasion lasted, and no longer.

While the armies lay before Cabool, a strong detachment was sent into the Kohistan, with the objects of overtaking if possible Mahomed Akbar, and of inflicting such retribution as might be in their power, upon that district, the head-quarters of successful rebellion. Mahomed Akbar escaped, but the

other "objects contemplated by superior authority in the Kohistan" were effectually accomplished at Charekar, Istaliff, and elsewhere; and the detachment returned in ten or twelve days from a victorious and destructive campaign.

Meanwhile the prisoners, secluded among the precipitous valleys of the Hindoo Koosh, knew not whether to hope or fear most from the doubtful reports that reached them of the progress of our victorious army. At length, in the very crisis of their fate, the adherent to whom Akbar had confided them was bought over, and the prisoners, headed by their jailer, occupied the fort to which they had been sent for custody, in open revolt against the power which had sent them there. It was a curious position in human affairs, and not without its peril; but their proceedings were conducted with spirit and prudence, and all went well with them, until they found themselves once more in an English camp, restored to safety and freedom. The principal immediate agent in their recovery was, appropriately, the same English officer whose name was previously known as connected with a service to humanity more free from alloy, more purely gratifying, than it can have often fallen to the lot of a military man to effect —the rescue and safe conduct to St. Petersburg of the prisoners detained at Khiva. Sir Richmond Shakespeare, to whose lot two such services have fallen, is indeed a man to be envied.

This was the bright spot in the campaign of 1842. There were others of a darker character. Whatever

was the original object of the campaign, some acts were done which broadly stamped it with the character of revenge. To the punishment inflicted in the Kohistan, the burning of Charekar, the plunder and burning of Istaliff, was added the plunder and burning of a great part of Cabool. The name of Istaliff, for a time the symbol of all atrocity, has by subsequent information lost a great part of its original stain*; the

* The Indian Government has redeemed itself from the charge of indifference, by instituting an inquiry; and at the end of the *Annual Register* for 1842, will be found several papers on the subject, and especially one from General M'Caskill, containing that officer's statement respecting what occurred at Istaliff, where he commanded. It is a complete vindication of General M'Caskill himself from the charge of inhumanity—but it does not make perfectly clear the question of the conduct of the army.

General M'Caskill indeed first states his "firm persuasion" that no such case occurred as the killing of an Affghan in cold blood; next, says "that it is probable that while the first excitement of the attack continued" "ten or twelve unarmed Affghans may have fallen a sacrifice." But it also appears from his account that the brigade which took the town was dispersed in it plundering for nearly the whole of that day; and it does not appear whether he was himself in the town. Is it impossible to reconcile in some degree his statement with that of the denouncers of the cruelties of Istaliff?

General M'Caskill lays stress, like all others who wrote on his side, on the undoubted fact that women and children were protected: and so far it is well. But Istaliff when attacked was crowded with warriors; after it was taken, "in two or three places," says General M'Caskill, "the troops on their way through the town found small parties of the male inhabitants, who begged for quarter, and received it." Were the rest all slain, *resisting?*

Fully believing that as far as his knowledge could reach General M'Caskill's statements are entitled to the fullest credit —we must yet recollect that there are other and opposite

worst recollection perhaps now attached to it is the slight degree of feeling awakened in this country by the

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accounts. It is true that these accounts are anonymous—but of the many officers who would turn with abhorrence from the commission of cruelties few would set their names to a statement so obnoxious to their comrades.

That the spirit of the army was not altogether such as a man of humanity could approve, may be inferred from the first words of an order issued by General M'Caskill himself, two days before the attack on Istaliff. "The Major-General feels himself called upon to notice, in terms of the most marked reprobation, the acts of outrage committed by some of the troops of this force during the last two marches."

But we have unfortunately other testimony to the same point. Wishing for information on the subject of Istaliff, I referred to Lieutenant Greenwood's *Narrative of the Campaign of* 1842, just published. On this point it contained nothing beyond the old statement—"prodigious slaughter," and great stress laid on the protection of the women and children. But it contains not a few passages indicative of the general feelings of the army during the campaign of 1842. "I would bayonet," said one of the Sepoys to Lieutenant Greenwood, in the Khyber Pass, "a Khyberee of a month old at his mother's breast;" a sentiment which Lieutenant Greenwood tells us was not surprising to him; and which, it may be heartily wished he had told us, was discouraged by him. Those who doubt the existence of a savage spirit in the army, are requested to look at a page in Lieutenant Greenwood's narrative headed "A Precocious Savage." It contains an anecdote introduced with the remark "There is a ferocity about the Affghans which they seem to imbibe with their mother's milk." A little wild Khyberee boy, about six years old, was seen by a soldier trying, as he had doubtless been taught to do, to hack off the head of a dead enemy; a savage habit, which the sepoys throughout the campaign seem perpetually to have practised. The soldier,—not a sepoy, but an *English* soldier!—"coolly took him up on his bayonet and threw him over the cliff." Coolly as this hellish deed was done, so coolly is it told—without one word of remark or censure. The savage is the *child!*

original statement of the Indian papers, that Istaliff was given over to fire and sword: that no mercy whatever was shown; that the men were hunted down like wild beasts; an exaggerated statement, doubtless, which long remained without effectual contradiction. A little questioning, a little explanation, to the effect that as Affghan houses were all built and occupied like fortresses, it was impossible that fighting could cease on the entrance of the troops into the town, satisfied the House of Commons and the public generally. It was not so, either in or out of the House of Commons, when an unwise, incautious, and unpopular proclamation of the present Governor-general gave a popular handle for a party attack upon the existing government; and the contrast is a disgrace to the nation in which it occurred. The self-styled religious world, which, at the Somnauth proclamation, screamed and yelled out like a man whose gouty foot is trod on, received the news of the slaughter of Istaliff with the calmness of the same man putting the sound leg into water rather too hot; it flinched a little and that was all. Both were characteristic; yet, were it not for the unfeigned indifference, we might have made more allowance for the hypocritical and canting clamour. The heathen and unscrupulous Athenians, it is said, once received a general who came to them fresh from the performance of brilliant services, but accused of a great crime against Grecian morality, not with thanks, but a trial, in the course of which, hopeless of a favourable result, he slew himself in the assembly. When we

first read this story, we thought—but that was a youthful error—that the time had come at which a nation calling itself civilized and Christian would not be indifferent to an accusation of savage cruelty, even against its victorious armies.

Finally, having proved their power to march through the country of the Affghans, if not to subdue it; having furnished the Affghans with sufficient memorials of the event in their history which they are least likely to forget, the great Anglo-Indian invasion; holding, but not without fierce dispute to the last, at least so much of Affghanistan as their line of march occupied from day to day; the English forces withdrew through the famous and fatal passes, and the Affghan war was over. They brought with them various recollections, some disgraceful, some glorious, none that are not mournful; they brought, too, certain guns from the Bala Hissar, and the gates and mace of Mahmoud, the only tangible gain of the historic scene which thus closed. They left behind them a country, in which their presence had, for four years, been the cause of every possible evil that can afflict a nation:—war, misgovernment, then war again, foreign and domestic; terminating in utter anarchy, an anarchy which impartial history, when she speaks of the Affghans, will *not* denominate the "consequence of *their* crimes." Doubtless, the Affghans, like every other nation that ever was engaged in a similar contest, committed crimes in the struggle for their independence. But in taking away their independence without cause, the English inflicted on

them the greatest wrong which nation can inflict on nation. Of all the mutual misery, of their savage and treacherous hatred, of our cruel revenge, our injustice was the origin. Evil would not be so evil, if the very nature of wrong were not to provoke to wrong;—if the Affghans are now a worse people than they were five years since, is the fault theirs, or ours? "The beginning of strife is as when one letteth out water;" is that a new saying? Is it a recent discovery, that war will necessarily lead to atrocities and crimes? and is it not for this very cause that an unjust war is most criminal? Nations in different stages of civilization must be expected to carry on war upon different principles, and to temper its conduct with different degrees of humanity. But, if we were to enter on the inquiry, which, in the mere conduct of the war, had offended most against their own standard of right and wrong, is it so certain that the answer would be favourable to the English?

We do not think that any candid reader of Lieutenant Eyre's work will lay it down with an impression altogether hostile to the Affghans. If, in the conflict for their independence, they committed many fierce and treacherous actions, they yet on many occasions entitled themselves to the praise of truth and mercy. When Lieutenant Eyre refers gratefully to the hand of Providence, as clearly discernible in "restraining the wrath of savage men whose intense hatred of us was only equalled by their unscrupulous cruelty," he conveys, in general terms, a censure which the facts related by him show to be far from

universally applicable. An insurrection in any country, and especially such a country as Affghanistan, is no orderly, disciplined, well-conducted thing; the leaders in such a struggle have to make the fiercest passions of their countrymen the instruments of their deliverance: their influence is mainly directed to excite, and not to calm, the hatred which they share; and the history of every popular rising can furnish examples of their want of power to restrain it, when they have the will. Yet, in several instances, we find the chiefs exerting themselves to the utmost, and risking their own lives to preserve the lives of Europeans from their followers. An English officer orders his men to take charge of, and protect a prisoner, and he is obeyed:—an Affghan—

"Takes off his turban, the last appeal a Mussulman can make, and implores the savage Ghazees, for God's sake, to respect the life of his friend."

"My conductor and Meerza Bàordeen Khan were obliged to press me up against the wall, covering me with their own bodies, and protesting that no blow should reach me but through their persons."

Afterwards—"these drew their swords in my defence, the chief himself throwing his arm round my neck, and receiving on his shoulder a cut aimed by Moollah Momin at my head *."

Look, too, at the conduct of the Nawab Zeman Khan, an old chieftain, some time king of the insurgent city of Cabool; in whose custody we left the

* Captain Mackenzie's Account of the Envoy's Murder.

hostages given before our army left the cantonments. After protecting them for months against the constant efforts of the Ghazee fanatics to slay them, he at last consigned them to the care of the Meer Wyze, the high priest of Cabool, in whose venerated protection he believed they would be more secure.

"Before sending them to the Meer Wyze, which was done at night, he took the precaution to line the streets with his own followers, with strict orders to fire upon every one who should so much as poke his head out of a window; and he not only accompanied them himself, but sent his own family on a-head."

It is impossible not to smile at the very decided character of the *precaution;* but when good faith and plighted protection are at stake, we will not quarrel with strong measures. Noble old Zeman Khan! We read again that "hundreds of Hindostanees crowded the streets of Cabool, begging for bread, which was daily served out to them by Nawab Jubbar Khan and Zeman Khan."

These Hindostanees were the survivors of an invading and conquering army. We have seen the survivors of a legion, sent out under authority of the English Government, reduced to destitution by the non-fulfilment of the promises under which they were enrolled, meet with less kindness in the streets of London. But Mahomedanism is a charitable religion, and its professors frequently act up to its precepts.

These facts would we think be sufficient to redeem

the Affghans from the sweeping charge of treachery and inhumanity, which has been so frequently made against them. But there is one Affghan, whose name, generally regarded as the symbol of every atrocity, is too closely connected with the darkest of our calamities for us to pass the subject without some reference to him in particular—Mahomed Akbar Khan.

This man, the second and favourite son of Dost Mahomed, and the only one of the family who never submitted to our power, was, in his own words, "when an English army entered his country, compelled to become our enemy, and was for three years a wanderer, and returned at the end of the confusion." Not yet (if Dost Mahomed may be believed,) twenty-two years of age, he had seen his father driven from power, to make way for a king set up by, and on behalf of, a set of foreign conquerors. To him it must all have seemed the most utter injustice, and so he "returned at the end of the confusion" our fierce and unscrupulous enemy, with one object at heart, —to rid the country of the English. In Captain Mackenzie's account of the death of the Envoy we find that, after "laying about him manfully" to save Captain Mackenzie from the Ghazees, Akbar Khan turned to the English officer clinging to his stirrup, "and repeatedly said, in a tone of triumphant derision, '*You'll seize my country, will you?*'" An ungenerous departure, certainly, from the tone of courtesy which his outward demeanour towards the English prisoners usually exhibited, but noticeable as illustra-

tive of the feelings under which he acted, then and afterwards.

Even without Lieutenant Eyre's concluding expression of regret over the high gifts and endowments which Mahomed Akbar has sullied with indelible stains, we should have been disposed to attribute to him some eminent qualities. Unscrupulous as to means, possessed with a great object, capable of generous actions,—capable also of great crimes,—wily, yet of frank, open, attractive demeanour,—such men have often been the instruments in great changes, and as their history is written by the one side or the other, they descend to posterity as heroic deliverers, or fiend-like destroyers. To those who heard of his deeds at the distance of half the world, Akbar appeared the latter. It is curious to observe the different and natural tone generally used by the captives when speaking of their captors. The monsters and miscreants become men, like other men, when seen close at hand, by those whom their deeds has caused so much immediate suffering and danger. While the relatives of the prisoners and the slain, were shuddering at the name of Akbar Khan with a mixture of fear and horror for which there was but too much reason; the prisoners themselves ate, drank, and talked with the terrible chieftain at their ease, and on terms of convivial equality. The evil genius of the English army, the murderer—for such he was—of the representative of England, sat down playfully on the floor among the children of those whose lives and liberties depended on his orders,

"dipped into the dish as merrily as any of them," and was a great favourite with them. Lady Sale, though she professes to desire his death, speaks of him without hatred and passion, and Lieutenant Eyre with some degree of positive regard.

Of the murder of the Envoy, he is clearly guilty; and, towards a man who trusted him, though plotting against others, it was an atrocious deed. Still, it appears to have been committed in sudden exasperation, without any previous design; looking at the circumstances of the case, the wrongs his country and family had endured, the fierce passions, the lax morality of the East, we do not think, with Mr. Eyre, that it places him "beyond the pale of even Christian forgiveness;" which we recollect somewhere to have read, forgiveth all things.

Lieutenant Eyre often speaks of this, the *one* deed but for which Akbar would be worthier than most of those he acted with; but, in our judgment, the deliberate massacre of the army was, if he was guilty of it, a far worse deed than the murder of the Envoy. The doubt, which for a time hung over this transaction, is now, we think, dispelled by a comparison of the previous warnings with his subsequent half avowal. He might, possibly, think that the English would not perform that part of the treaty which bound them to evacuate Jellalabad and the other garrisons; that the safe arrival of so large a force at Jellalabad would only enable them to reconquer the country in spring. The savage and uncontrolled tribes of the Passes afforded the easy

means of destroying the retreating force, and he deliberately roused or permitted them to do so. It was a crime not to be defended on any pretence of patriotism. Yet the massacre of Jaffa, for which there was less excuse, has not destroyed the French adoration for Napoleon. Blacker treachery for the same purpose has not prevented the Germans from making a national hero of Arminius. Among those who have founded, or extended, empires in the East, there are few whose lives are free from similar or worse stains. The Mahratta hero, Sevajee, would have done it; Aurungzebe would have done it; or, to come to those with whom we have ourselves been connected, Tippoo, or Hyder, would have done it.

Strong contrasts of good and evil may be expected in the characters of half-civilized men; and there are few contrasts more striking than those presented by the pages of Lieutenant Eyre's book. The man who could plot the treacherous slaughter of an army, whilst that very slaughter is going on receives the individuals who are thrown into his hands with hospitable and apparently unaffected kindness. Lieutenant Melville is brought in wounded, and Mahomed Akbar "dressed his wounds with his own hands, applying burnt rags, and paid him every attention." The captives and their guards have to swim a river, and Akbar "manifested the greatest anxiety until all had crossed in safety." His conduct to them throughout, excepting occasional bursts of passion, appears to have been of the same character. Among civilized states very few prisoners of war are,

with reference to the means of their captors, treated nearly as well as the English prisoners under the care of Akbar Khan. Compare this again, with the conduct of other Oriental sovereigns; with the horrible cruelty shown towards their European captives by Hyder or Tippoo.

All this, it may be said, sprang from a politic intention to secure some title to our consideration; and it cannot be doubted, that policy had its share in the kind treatment of his captives by Mahomed Akbar. There is, however, every appearance that his judgment was seconded by his natural inclination. Nor in the spectacle of the same man deliberately devoting many thousands to slaughter for a great object, and receiving the survivors with real kindness, is there any unexampled or inexplicable inconsistency. Take away his evil deeds, and Mahomed Akbar would have been entitled to high praise for his good ones. He is, then, at least, entitled to the benefit of them as a set-off; and, comparing the one with the other, we cannot but rejoice that he did not, by falling into the hands of the English, place them in the position of passing upon him a judgment which could hardly have been a just one.

Partly for mere justice, partly to show one-sided observers that even these matters have two sides, we have thought it worth while to bestow thus much attention upon the conduct of a remarkable man. We return to a ground more important, and less open to controversy, in returning, for a few words of retrospect, to the relation of England to Affghanistan.

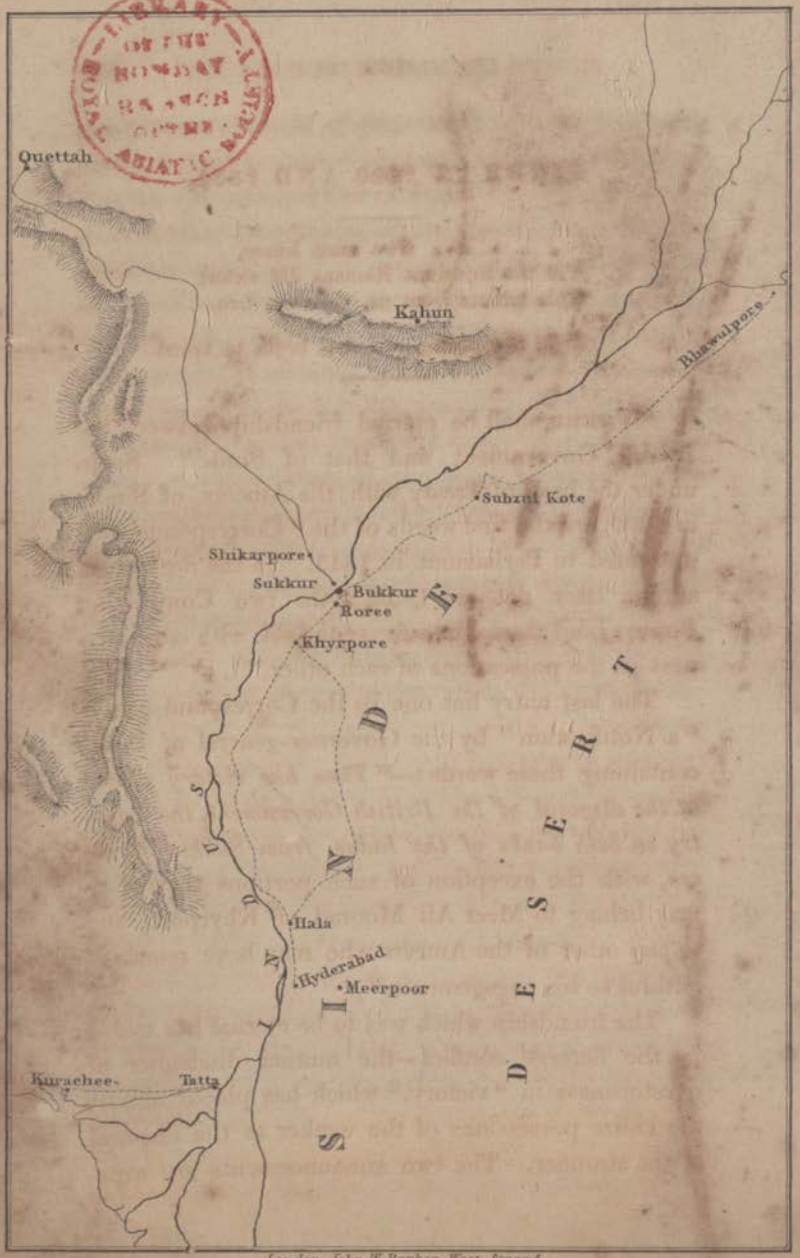
Towards the beginning of these observations, we quoted the declaration of its own intentions, made in 1838, by the Government of India. The subsequent facts are, as we then said, the most striking comment on this declaration, presenting as they do so curious and singular a contrast between the end and the beginning. Such as we have described it, was the scheme, and such as we have described it, the ultimate fulfilment. Thus were carried out the "confident hopes" of the Governor-general, and thus, but not on the terms which he anticipated, was the "British army finally withdrawn." The contradiction between design and accomplishment is the very common-place of history; but it has seldom been more strikingly shown than in the series of events we have followed.

On the defeat, still more on the destruction, of English forces, employed in whatever cause, we cannot look with any other feeling than mere pain; and if there are any whose patriotism is more cosmopolitan, we are not sure that we envy them this liberality. But separating as far as we can, our judgment from our feeling, and looking impartially at this four years' war, from beginning to end, we cannot but see simply this—a great injustice deliberately planned, backed by great power, for a time triumphant, and then, by the natural and direct consequences of injustice, violently overthrown. Let those who can, exult in the consideration that much as we have suffered, it is probable we have inflicted yet more; we can derive no consolation from such a thought. Let

us honour, as we ought, those who have bravely served their country—but, as a nation, God knows, we have no ground for triumph.

We have received a severe lesson, which we may make a useful one; if we choose to learn from it, well—if not, we shall perpetrate injustice again and again; till, perhaps, another and another before "unparalleled calamity," carrying horror and misery into hundreds of English families, shall, at length, awaken the nation to a right sense of its responsibility, a right sense of the guilt incurred by the careless crimes whereby statesmen bid for majorities, a right sense of a truth, old even in the days we call most ancient, but not worn out now—nor now, nor ever perfectly learned,

—— ΔΡΑΣΑΝΤΙ ΠΑΘΕΙΝ,
τριγέρων μῦθος τάδε φωνεῖ.



ROYAL ASIATIC SOCIETY LIBRARY

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SINDE IN 1838 AND 1839.

. . . . . You must know,
Till the injurious Romans did extort
This tribute from us, we were free.

I do the wrong, and first begin to brawl.

"THERE shall be eternal friendship between the British Government and that of Sinde." Such, under the head of Treaty with the Ameers of Sinde, in 1809, are the first words of the "Correspondence" presented to Parliament in 1843. In the next page, at the later date of 1832, "the two Contracting Powers bind themselves never to look with covetousness on the possessions of each other."

The last entry but one in the Correspondence, is "a Notification" by the Governor-general of India, containing these words:—"*Thus has victory placed at the disposal of the British Government, the country on both banks of the Indus, from Sukkur to the sea*, with the exception of such portions thereof as may belong to Meer Ali Moorad of Khyrpore, and to any other of the Ameers who may have remained faithful to his engagements."

The friendship which was to be eternal has ended in the fiercest conflict—the mutual disclaimer of covetousness in "victory," which has placed almost the entire possessions of the weaker at the disposal of the stronger. The two announcements are sepa-

rated by two inches of Blue Book, filled with documents referring almost exclusively to the history of the five years from 1838 to 1843; to which has since been added, in 1844, a smaller volume of Supplementary Correspondence, filling up the deficiencies of our information respecting the later occurrences. In these papers is to be sought the justification, if the case admits of one,—if not, at least the history, of the stages of this rapid transition.

The subject naturally divides itself into two main parts; the first, the course of events which, under Lord Auckland, led to the establishment of our entire political and military supremacy in Sinde: the second, those which, under Lord Ellenborough, reduced it from a dependency to a province of our own empire. The first step, effected without actual conflict, passed almost unnoticed in England, in the crowd of events and the excitement of the Affghan campaign; the second startled every one to attention by the sound of a great battle breaking in upon the stillness of the peace so lately proclaimed throughout India. But the first and noiseless step was, perhaps, the wider; and if these papers represent the case truly, of a far more unequivocal character. Viewed in connection with the first, as we are bound in justice to view it, the second will be seen to have been, at the worst, the consistent consummation of the career on which the first entered; at the best, its grievous but necessary consequence. There will always be some difficulty in estimating the real character of a step thus lying between two extremes, and

perhaps partaking of the nature of both. But if any are perplexed with the difficulty of judging fairly the separate parts of a connected transaction, let them be content with looking at the whole, and they will feel no doubt at all.

Before passing to the consideration of the events, which in 1839 brought the previously independent Government of Sinde under British "protection," it is proper to say a few words about these Ameers of whom we have heard so much, and about the people and the country which are theirs no longer.

A stripe of land bordering the river on each side, and fertilized by its inundations, bounded to the west by the mountains of Beloochistan and Gundava, to the east by the great Indian desert, extending northwards to a point a little below the meeting of the most eastern with the most western of the five rivers of the Punjaub, and southwards, to the Delta of the Indus and the sea; this is Sinde. As Egypt is the land of the Nile, so Sinde is the land of the Indus.

On the west of the river, the dominions of the Ameers met those of Runjeet Singh; on the east, a portion of the country of Bhawulpore interposes itself between Sinde and the Punjaub.

The Ameers of Sinde were the heads of the Talpoors, a Beloochee tribe or family, who, towards the end of the last century, drove out the existing rulers of Sinde, known in history by the name of Caloras.

The Beloochee chieftains held their lands under them by the tenure of military service; and the Beloochee tribes were, and bore themselves towards the

rest of the inhabitants, as a conquering and governing people. It does not certainly appear what proportion of the whole nation they constituted, but they showed themselves able to bring something like 60,000 men into the field, which would give them at least a quarter of a population estimated at about one million; and it appears from a recent despatch of Sir C. Napier's, that up to the time of our conquest, between the Beloochee chiefs and their followers, nearly every other man through the country bore arms.

Their aristocracy then, may have been tyrannical, but it rested upon no narrow basis,—they were the soldiery, the strength of the nation; and they stood towards the rest of it in the same relation, and possibly in the same numerical proportion as that in which the Magyars of Hungary—at once the people and the nobles of Hungary—at this day stand towards the "misera plebs contribuens."

The date of the Talpoor conquest was, in the opinion of some writers, so very recent as to constitute of itself a sufficient answer to the complaints of these new come usurpers against their dispossession by the English;—the English, who have themselves, within the same period, conquered far more than half of India. The founder appears to have established himself in Hyderabad in 1786; his dominions passed to his children; and in 1838, the third generation was reigning in the two divisions of Sinde. A confederacy of princes, all nearly related, but distinguished as Ameers of Upper and of Lower Sinde; each division acknowledging a right of headship with

rather indefinite powers attached to it, in some one of their number. Four of them, and those the most powerful, were established at Hyderabad, the capital of Lower Sinde; four at Khyrpore, the capital of Upper Sinde. The head of the Hyderabad Ameers was, in 1838, Meer Noor Mahomed Khan; of the Khyrpore Ameers, Meer Roostum Khan. There was also Meer Shere Mahomed, head of the small state of Meerpore, east of Hyderabad; a chieftain of far inferior power to the rest.

Their rule was weak and tyrannical, perhaps rather worse than that of average Asiatic rulers; the lowest classes feared and hated them, the Beloochee chieftains obeyed while they despised them, upholding them as the heads of their race, and serving them in the field with feudal fidelity.

It is also necessary to add that the Ameers of Sinde had been formerly, since the expulsion of the Caloras, tributary to the Kings of Cabool: that is, they had withheld tribute when they could, and paid it when they could not help it; but none had been paid since the expulsion of the Suddozye dynasty and the establishment of the Barukzyes in Affghanistan. So that in 1838 the Ameers had been for between twenty and thirty years practically independent of Cabool. In fact they had, it would seem, been exempt from tribute to Cabool for as long a series of years as they had paid it.

On the occasion of Captain Burnes' mission in 1831 to Lahore, the Ameers showed considerable jealousy respecting his passage through the country

and up the Indus: "Alas, Sinde is now gone, since the English have seen the river," were the prophetic words of one of their Syuds, as he gazed on the passing boat of the stranger. The river *had* been seen, its capabilities of commerce keenly observed, and in 1832 a commercial treaty was concluded with the Ameers, (p. 4, *Correspondence,*) in which, after professions of equal and eternal friendship, and strong references to the tenth commandment, it appears that the British Government has "requested" a passage for the merchants and merchandize of Hindoostan by the river and roads of Sinde,—a request which the Government of Sinde grants on three distinct conditions:

"1. That no person shall bring any description of military stores by the above river or roads.

"2. That no armed vessels or boats shall come by the said river.

"3. That no English merchants shall be allowed to settle in Sinde, but shall come as occasion requires, and having stopped to transact their business, shall return to India."

Conditions, of which the object was as unmistakeable as their language was distinct. But the "uncontrollable principle" was not to be so controlled.

In 1836, the Ameers of Sinde, being threatened with invasion by Runjeet Singh, applied for and received our mediation on their behalf. We interfered effectually for their protection, and on this interference was founded a request for the future

establishment of a British Resident at their court; a right which they conceded with a degree of suspicion which was considered very preposterous as well as ungrateful. Were they so wrong in their suspicion? The treaty which introduced the British Resident is dated April 20, 1838; in less than *ten months* from that time, that same British Resident declared that, "the British supremacy was finally and fully established in Sinde."

In the summer of 1838 the Indian Government having resolved on the deposition of Dost Mahomed and the reinstatement of Shah Soojah in Cabool, the triple alliance between Runjeet Singh, Shah Soojah, and the British Government, was concluded on the 26th June; and preparations were set on foot for the invasion of Affghanistan.

The inquiry into the wisdom and justice of that measure need not here be repeated; if it was unjust, the steps which it alone made necessary cannot be defended merely because they were its legitimate consequences. But our conduct towards the Ameers of Sinde deserves consideration on its own peculiar merits.

There were two main routes possible for the "Army of the Indus" into Affghanistan; one of them led across the Punjaub into the defiles of the Khyber to Jellalabad, and thence to Cabool; the other and longer route, led through the territory of Upper Sinde, by Shikarpore, to Quettah, Candahar, and Ghuznee. Among other reasons for selecting for the main strength of the army the route by

Upper Sinde, the principal was the following:—Runjeet Singh, though the "old and faithful" ally of the British Government, felt an inexplicable distrust of his "old and faithful," but yet more powerful, confederates. He was of course ready to join in a treaty, which promised him, among other advantages, fifteen lacs of rupees. But he knew human nature well, and he knew that it is often better for it to shun than to resist temptation; he trembled for the results of the trial to which the British virtue might be exposed, by the presence of their armies in the heart of his country; and he, most politely no doubt, but positively, declined to permit their main force to proceed that way. It was necessary, therefore, to seek a passage through Sinde, and negotiations were opened with this object in both Upper and Lower Sinde; that at Hyderabad was conducted by Colonel Pottinger, that at Khyrpore by Sir Alexander Burnes. The latter it will be sufficient to notice shortly hereafter; the first was far the most important and critical; the papers relative to it occupy a far greater space in the Blue Book, and to it most of the following remarks will be directed.

In August, 1838, Colonel Pottinger, the British Resident in Sinde, received from Mr. Macnaghten, then Secretary with the Governor-general, instructions to announce to the Ameers the various demands upon them which formed a part of the arrangements just concluded. One of these, of course, was to permit and facilitate the passage of the army destined for the invasion of Affghanistan; another was,—

but let Mr. Macnaghten here speak for himself, (page 9, 10, *Correspondence*): "While the present exigency lasts, you may apprize the Ameers that the article of the treaty with them, prohibitory of using the Indus for the conveyance of military stores, must necessarily be *suspended.*"

Now let it be assumed that these demands were necessary—necessary, that is, to the successful prosecution of the Affghan expedition; at any rate they must have been most unacceptable, such as the Ameers must have been expected to resist, if possible, and to yield most grudgingly. Both were in the teeth of the treaty of 1832. The second especially, was, as Mr. Macnaghten's own words show, one of those barefaced violations of a distinct agreement which are possible only for the stronger party; and the only "necessity" for conceding it which the Ameers could be expected to see, must have been the necessity of their position as the weaker.

But something surely was done to obviate objections so natural? some attempt made to render less unpalatable a hateful and suspicious demand? to lead these jealous princes to connect our entrance into their country with something else than the "suspending" of treaties? something, if it were but a money-payment,—some compensation, if not an equivalent, was thrown into the opposite scale of this one-sided bargain?

Something *was* thrown in, but not into the opposite scale; something so absurdly and curiously unjust, that it is at first sight difficult to divine the mo-

tives which caused its addition. By Article XVI. of the Tripartite Treaty it was agreed that Sinde was to pay a large sum to Shah Soojah, (of which he was at once to make over the largest part to Runjeet Singh,) as price of the acknowledgment of its future independence.—Sinde, no party to the agreement; Sinde, practically independent of Cabool for as many years as it had been tributary to Cabool; Sinde, with which the English had dealt as an independent power; Sinde, upon whose rulers the English Government were already making on their own behalf such demands as would have tried the closest friendship to the uttermost,—was called upon to pay to Shah Soojah, partly as a means of enabling him to make an otherwise hopeless payment to Runjeet Singh, this price of the renunciation of an obsolete claim: a price, unfixed as yet, the ultimate amount to be fixed, in the words of the treaty, "under the mediation of the British Government."

"The Governor-general," says the Secretary, "has not yet determined the amount which the Ameers may be fairly called upon to pay, and it should not therefore immediately be named, *but the minimum may certainly be taken at twenty lacs of rupees.* His Lordship will endeavour to prevail upon Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk, to reduce the claim which he has on the Ameers, to a reasonable amount." *Endeavour to prevail,* on a man whom they found a beggar, and were about to make a king!

The only assignable motives for this arrangement appear to be the wish to provoke resistance as a

pretext for further demands, a motive purely wicked; or the convenience of the money, a motive purely base. Against this last it has been urged, that we derived no profit from the transaction; and it has even been maintained in the recent debate, that a great boon was held out to Sinde in the offer of securing thus cheaply their independence. Was not Sinde already practically independent? Was there a bare possibility that Shah Soojah, unaided by the English, would ever be in a position to enforce tribute from the Ameers? What strength, what soldiers, what money had Shah Soojah to establish his claim on Sinde, or on Cabool either, except what the English gave him? What right had they to make a nation which, without their interference, was independent of Cabool, pay a price for the independence which their interference alone could endanger? If they wished the independence of Sinde and that only, a word to their creature, Shah Soojah, would have made it independent. If, from considerations of justice or policy, they were careful to establish Shah Soojah's rights, why sell them for money?

The real truth is transparent: the designs of the Indian Government on behalf of Shah Soojah could not be carried into effect without a large expenditure; of himself, he was powerless and penniless; the expenditure, whether it passed through their hands or his, was ultimately sure to fall upon them; he was certain to cost them much; and they resolved that he should cost them as little as possible. The services too or the claims of Runjeet Singh, on the Shah, were

to be paid off—the Shah could not pay him, and the English would not. They looked about for a party whom they might rob with ease, with plausibility, and with profit, and they found one in the Ameers of Sinde.

The plausibility which recommended them as the subject of the operation was such as we have seen; the profit—this was as yet uncertain in amount, and Colonel Pottinger's opinion was requested as to the monied ability of the victims, "on the understanding that it is his Lordship's desire to fix the sum with an indulgent disposition towards the Ameers, though without losing sight of the value which the boon in question should be to them. *His Lordship will only add as a suggestion to aid your opinion on the subject, that the Ameers may fairly be supposed to be wealthy . . .*" for such and such reasons.

A quiet hint, most appropriately relegated, not indeed, to the postscript, but to the last sentence of the letter of which it is the cream. Indignation would be out of place here. This suggestion occurs in a state paper, and it is therefore dignified diplomacy. But it is impossible not to picture to oneself the lively effect which a similar passage would produce in a court of justice when read from a private letter in evidence against parties on their trial for a "*conspiracy to extort money.*"

Let us try to see how the rest of the case would look, if translated into a parallel in private life.

A country gentleman grants to a wealthy company the right of making into a canal and navigating

a river passing through his grounds. He has a great horror of railroads through his property, and the Company, in part purchase of his assent to the canal, bind themselves never to apply to Parliament for a railroad. A few years after, however, they do apply. —Fabulists have a large privilege, and Parliaments are proverbially omnipotent, especially in the way of occasionally granting to powerful parties indemnity from legal penalties; let no one therefore be startled at the supposition which follows. The Company have influence enough not only to get their bill passed, but to get themselves relieved from the penalty in which they were bound never to make such an application. The half-despairing squire turns to the bill in hope of some compensation; he finds no mention of any; but he finds instead a rider attached, by which he is actually saddled with part of the expenses of the detestable railroad. Conceive the horror of the country gentleman. Conceive the vituperations of the newspapers. Yet the newspapers have been all but silent, and the country gentlemen have sate quietly assenting to this very thing.

"Nonsense," you say, "this could never be done in England." No—but in Asia it can. The river is the Indus, the march of the British force on Affghanistan is the railroad, the Ameers are the country-gentleman, the Company is—*The Company*, and Parliament is Parliament.

But the natural question occurs, What had the Ameers done to provoke such demands? Nothing, at any rate, that could be urged against them, if we are

to judge from the Secretary's letter, which directs the British Resident "to apprise the Ameers that the disposition of the British Government towards them is extremely favourable, and that nothing would distress the Governor-general more than an interruption of the good understanding which has hitherto prevailed:" * * * and requires from them as "sincere friends and near neighbours," these concessions, already named, which are therefore the minimum. If they or any of them should already have exhibited any unfriendly disposition by connecting themselves with Persia, Colonel Pottinger was intrusted with almost unlimited powers, including the summoning from Bombay a sufficient force to take immediate "possession of the capital of Sinde."

On the receipt of these instructions Colonel Pottinger seems to have felt, as who would not? that it would be a difficult task to bring the Ameers to look upon them as acceptable, or even tolerable; and the proposal respecting the payment in particular seemed to him beset with difficulties. His opinions may be found hinted pretty clearly, though with the proper reserve of a servant of the Government, in his dispatch of August 27, (p. 14.) Colonel Pottinger therein suggests that some of the Ameers may "even go so far as to declare that the demand is a breach of the late agreement, on the principle that, without our assistance, Shah Soojah-ool-Moolk had no means of exacting one rea from them; consequently that the demand may be considered our own. I do not, by pointing out this argument, mean for an instant to

uphold its correctness;" (of course not,) "but it is one just suited to the capacity and feelings of the individuals with whom I have to negotiate." But for the above disavowal, we might almost have suspected that the objection so contemptuously noticed was not unsuited to the capacity and feelings of the distinguished Resident himself; for in the next paragraph but one he repeats the same untenable argument, in a tone of almost covert satire. "Had our present connexion existed some years, and our Resident thereby had time, by constant kindly intercourse with the chiefs and people, to have removed *the strong and universal impression that exists throughout Sinde as to our grasping policy*, the case might have been widely different; but I enter on my new duties without anything to offer, and with a proposal *that will not only strengthen the above impressions* (*for many besides the Sindees will believe at the outset that we are making a mere use of Shah Soojah's name*), but revive a claim to tribute which has been long considered obsolete."

And then follows in most logical sequence a request for the preparation of a strong military force to be held in readiness on the frontier; by the "moral effect" whereof the desired consent may be obtained.

In the mean time, and before this dispatch was written, a copy of a letter, addressed by the principal Ameer, Noor Mahomed, to the Shah of Persia, then besieging Herat, had fallen into Colonel Pottinger's hands; a letter of some importance, with reference to much that followed. It had the effect of

placing Noor Mahomed in connexion with the great political bugbear of the day—the Russo-Persian advance towards the frontier of India. As it appears in the Blue Book, this letter reads like little more than a string of Oriental civilities; and Colonel Pottinger, though satisfied by other circumstances that the feelings of Noor Mahomed were jealous and unfriendly, expresses doubts (almost amounting to certainty) whether the letter itself is to be regarded as having any political object at all, or as a mere expression, on the part of a bigotted Sheeite, of attachment to the Shah of Persia as head of that sect of Mahometanism.

The bearer of the letter however might, as the Resident hints, be charged with secret messages of a different import; and from information subsequently received, little doubt can be felt of Noor Mahomed's having in fact attempted to open communications with the Shah of Persia in opposition to our schemes (page 9). Were the Indian Government's demands, *preceding* as they did the knowledge of these facts, calculated to induce him to change his course? All such attempts, however, seem to have been dropped on the retirement of the Persians from Herat. By the Indian Government, however, Noor Mahomed's letter was accepted at once as a proof of treacherous hostility; and the pretext which it held out for an advance in aggression on the rulers of Sinde was seized with eager determination.

In the dispatch of September 6th we find that Colonel Pottinger was empowered to act upon this

evidence of a hostile disposition in whatever manner he thought expedient, whether by the immediate deposition of the unfriendly chief or chiefs, (a step for which, though leaving Colonel Pottinger unshackled, the Government intimated their preference,) by a treaty for the permanent maintenance of a subsidiary force, or by otherwise inflicting penalties such as he might judge desirable. Of these courses the second was the one ultimately chosen. The idea of deposition Colonel Pottinger does not seem to have encouraged. His suggestion of "moral force" was not only accepted, but improved upon; the subsequent dispatch of September 20th announces the intention of the Governor-general to act upon it, not by merely assembling troops on the frontier, but by the actual occupation, whenever he thought it expedient, of the territory of Shikarpore. This was not, however, immediately done; nor was the ultimate intention of establishing a subsidiary force in Sinde as yet brought forward by Colonel Pottinger; both for the same reason—the troops were not yet ready.

To this point matters had been brought in a short time; but the months which were necessary for the assembling and moving on its different lines of march the army of the Indus, were spent at Hyderabad in long and weary negotiations, of which the tenor may be shortly stated.

The Ameers then, received our professions of friendly intentions with a natural suspicion, and our demands with a natural mixture of indignation and alarm. The plan of the campaign seems at first to

have involved only the passage of the Bengal army through Upper Sinde; but to this had been speedily added the advance of a force from Bombay, to proceed along the Indus northward from its mouth, through the heart of the Hyderabad territory: both divisions moving on the common point of Shikarpore, and traversing between them the whole territory of Sinde from north to south. They could not but see that the passage of these armies would at least place it in our power to do with them as we pleased, and they had no faith in our using our power with justice and moderation. They knew that in bringing troops into their country, and in the conveyance of stores up the Indus, we were acting in direct violation of a treaty; and they deeply resented the unjust and insolent pecuniary demand; a demand which, as we shall soon see, they had stronger grounds for resisting than even those which have been as yet brought forward.

It was clear, as Colonel Pottinger frequently says, that we could look to them for nothing like cordial co-operation, and must depend upon their fears alone. Their conduct is shown in the long and full dispatches to have been exactly what might be expected from weak and ignorant princes actuated by these feelings: natural, but not right; such as we cannot honour with sympathy, but must regard with deep compassion. They resisted with ever-returning pertinacity, not with dignified resolve; made, withdrew, and remade objections; they professed friendship, yet hinted enmity; they tried to coax the

Envoy, they tried to intimidate him; in both cases with such success as might have been expected; they talked of their devotion to the Governor-general; they talked of calling out their army: vacillating between the hateful Yes, and the passion-suggested but perilous No, they shuffled, they evaded, they lied; they acted as contemptibly, perhaps, as Charles or Ferdinand of Bourbon acted, while wriggling in the iron grasp of Napoleon.

Their weakness was increased by their utter want of mutual trust and union. Some were more friendly to the English than the rest; perhaps it would be more correct to say, appreciated the power of the English more justly. Meer Sobdar was the chief of these, and his prudence or attachment was afterwards rewarded with exemption from the tribute imposed on the rest. Noor Mahomed seems not to have shrunk from the duty which, as chief among his brethren he might feel imposed upon him by present circumstances, of telling whatever falsehood came uppermost, and of bearing with philosophic hardihood the demonstration of his perpetual self-contradictions. Colonel Pottinger's letters at this time are full of complaints of his "unblushing dishonesty." But from which side did the offence *come?*

All this, it is not surprising to find, tried hard the judgment and temper of the British representative. Yet, after all, the contrast between their demeanour and his, a contrast of which the dispatches convey a very lively and doubtless true conception, was no more than their relative positions

made perfectly natural. He pressed upon them in terms direct and straightforward the instructions of his Government, and did not conceal from them that they might be, in consequence of the backwardness they had already shown, subjected to yet further demands; he told them in the haughty, yet open language of power*, that the road through their territory, if refused, would be taken; that resistance would be their destruction; that the Governor-general was ready to go to war at once with Persia, Affghanistan, Nepaul, and Burmah, if requisite for the safety of India; that he scorned the insinuations of personal danger; that his Government had hundreds of better servants to take his place, but that the hinted threats were disgraceful to those who made them, alike as rulers and as men. So would a Roman ambassador have spoken at the court of Massinissa or Tigranes, and he would have spoken worthily and well. No fault can be found with the bearing of our representative; the thing to be regretted is, that in the year of Christ, 1838, the policy of England should be equally Roman.

The pecuniary payment to Shah Soojah was a subject of frequent discussion: but here Colonel Pottinger was met by the unexpected difficulty above alluded to, and thus stated in his dispatch of October 9:—"The question of a money payment by the Ameers of Sinde to Shah Shooja-ool-Moolk is, in my humble opinion, rendered very puzzling by two

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Correspondence, page 73.

releases, written in Korans, and sealed, and signed by his Majesty, which they have produced."

Very puzzling, indeed; but there is a diplomatic ingenuity which is proof against puzzles. No question appears to have been raised on the authenticity of these releases, which, seem to have been given on the occasion of some of Shah Soojah's previous attempts on Affghanistan; but some doubts were expressed as to their meaning. It was contended that they were merely renewed grants on the old terms, and this interpretation, it is fair to say, was adopted by Sir Alexander Burnes. We have, however, the words of the releases to judge from, at page 53 of the Correspondence, and in the dispatch of the 25th October, we find Colonel Pottinger's opinion as to their validity and meaning. After carefully distinguishing between the two documents, and pointing out that the words of the earlier, granted to a preceding Ameer, are consistent with the above interpretation, he thus proceeds to refer to and follow the terms of the second, granted to the existing rulers. "As will be observed, it contains a formal renunciation in behalf of the King, *of any sort of claim or pretensions* in Sinde, and Shikarpore, and their dependencies; and promises that none shall be made. How this is to be got over, I do not myself see." It is, indeed, difficult to see.

At page 84, however, we may learn how it *was* got over. The Secretary with the Governor-general, in a letter dated November 19, has the following passage,—a passage which every Englishman must

read with an indignation repressed only by melancholy recollections, and with astonishment even greater than his indignation.

"Admitting the documents produced to be genuine, and that they imply a relinquishment of all claim to tribute; still they would hardly appear to be applicable to present circumstances;"—

Certainly not. Circumstances were greatly changed. Shah Soojah gave the documents, doubtless, because it was then his interest to give them. It was now his, or the Indian Government's interest to retract them. This was the change, and the only change; but it would puzzle any one to say this change affected the validity of the releases. It is a pity, however, to interrupt the sentence, which thus continues; "And it is not conceivable that his Majesty should have foregone so valuable a claim without some equivalent, or that some counterpart agreement should not have been taken, the non-fulfilment of the terms of which may have rendered null and void his Majesty's engagements."

There *must* have been a counterpart: there *may* have been a non-fulfilment; but *was* there either?

Here are two distinct suppositions: 1st. That there was some such counterpart agreement: 2ndly. That that agreement had been violated; both necessary to the writer's purpose, both entirely and equally gratuitous: a chance of a chance—of what?—that the demand on the Ameers, scandalously unjust at any rate, may not also have been (as far as Shah Soojah was concerned) a piece of direct perjury; for perjury

in a Mahometan it must be to break an agreement solemnly made "in the name of God and by the sacred Koran."

The Secretary then proceeds to state that the question concerns Shah Soojah and the Ameers only—a statement of which the soundness has been already examined—and to suggest that the arbitration of the question might be left—to the Envoy and Minister at the court of Shah Soojah: that Envoy and Minister being ultimately, as all the world knows, himself, W. H. Macnaghten. These kind of things are severe trials to human patience. The downright sword of the conqueror may be bad enough; but it is noble compared with the "sharp practice" of the attorneylike politician.

Time passed on, and by the end of November the Bengal army was assembling on and along the river. A part of the Bombay force had arrived at its mouth; and the approach of danger had drawn from the Ameers, disunited, distrustful of each other, distrustful of the British Government, a reluctant consent to forward its designs. On the arrival, however, of the force from Bombay, the promised supplies of camels, boats, and grain, were not forthcoming; and much delay was occasioned by the deficiency. It can hardly be doubted that the uneasiness and suspicion of the Ameers had been increased by the knowledge which, as has been seen, they possessed, that something yet undisclosed was or might be hanging over them as a penalty for the backwardness they had already shown; and this, be it observed, was a difficulty of the British Government's own creation.

How could men be expected, even under circumstances otherwise more favourable, to co-operate frankly in the designs of the Government, when that very co-operation would enable it better to exact a punishment, of which they were repeatedly told they had already incurred the risk? But the difficulty was in one sense unavoidable. The intended demands altered from time to time, and the Correspondence suggests plan after plan, various means for one uniform end—the establishment of complete supremacy: but prominent in every scheme was the demand which related to the establishment in Sinde of a British subsidiary force, to be paid by the Ameers; and this it was of importance to keep back. Why, will appear from the following extracts from Colonel Pottinger's letter of the 15th of December.

"My dispatches subsequent to that of the 2nd of November will have shown the abject state to which Noor Mahomed Khan has been reduced by my refusal to treat with him relative to the money payment to Shah Shooja-ool-Moolk; *but even when labouring under his worst apprehensions, it will be observed that no such idea has apparently ever crossed his mind, as that our ultimate plan was to station even a company of sepoys in Sinde;* and the moment that intention is announced, I think it will be the signal for a cordial coalition to oppose our arrangements. Even had I authority to offer them our guarantee of their territory individually, without their paying one farthing for it, but stipulating that we were at our own expense to keep a force in this province, I think

they would reject the proposal; and therefore, to expect that they will, without coercion, consent to make the smallest pecuniary sacrifice, and to agree to our having a single regiment in their country, seems to me to be hopeless. They have acted all along, and are now doing so, as though we had put their friendship and forbearance to the last test, by requiring a passage for our troops through their country."

Considering the Treaty of 1832, perhaps it was not utterly unreasonable in the Ameers so to regard the passage of our armies; and, undoubtedly, Colonel Pottinger was quite right in anticipating that they would consider the proposal for the maintenance of a subsidiary force as a yet severer test of their friendship and forbearance. Perhaps they might even have said or thought that the proposal went far to justify their original jealousy of our approach in anything like a military capacity. The admission of a subsidiary force is synonymous with the deprivation of political independence; it is the usual and well-known rivet of the chain which binds a subject State to the Indian Government. A subsidized State is a State which exists by virtue of its allegiance to the paramount power. It was, therefore, Colonel Pottinger's intention not to disclose the fact that Sinde had ceased to be independent, until the absolute presence of the British force should, by rendering resistance hopeless, prevent it. But before this letter, written on the 15th of December, was penned, it seems that Sir Alexander Burnes, in the course of his communications with the old chief of Khyrpore, contrasting

the favourable terms which that chieftain might earn by friendly conduct with the penalty to be imposed on the Hyderabad Ameers, had "let the cat out of the bag;" and a sharp enough letter from Colonel Pottinger, of the 19th of December, rebukes him in consequence as a Marplot. This probably precipitated measures; and Colonel Pottinger, by this time striving with manifold delays in the British camp at Vikkur, at the mouth of the Indus, instantly wrote to summon the reserve force from Bombay. Finally, on the 13th of January, all things being ripe (p. 119), Lieutenant Eastwick was instructed by him to lay before the Ameers the draft of a Treaty of twenty-three Articles for their acceptance (p. 122). Some articles related to commerce at the port of Kurachee, some to the abolition of tolls on the Indus; but the critical points were contained in the 2nd and 3rd Articles, which are as follows:—

"2. The Governor-general of India has commanded that a British force shall be kept in Sinde, and stationed at the city of Tatta, where a cantonment will be formed. *The strength of this force is to depend on the pleasure of the Governor-general of India.*"

"3. Meer Noor Mahomed Khan, Meer Nusseer Mahomed Khan, and Meer Mahomed Khan, bind themselves to pay, annually, the sum of ————, in part of the expense of the force, *from the presence of which, their respective territories will derive such vast advantages.*"

It would be loss of time to enlarge on the effect of these articles; it is evident that the 2nd went to

establish our entire supremacy in Sinde (in Colonel Pottinger's words respecting a similar step) "as effectually as if we had subjugated it:" and that the 3rd made the Ameers, to that very end, our tributaries. It must be observed that the fourth Ameer, Meer Sobdar, is exempted from payment.

Lieutenant Eastwick has given, at page 131 of the Correspondence, a detailed and lively account of the conference which took place between himself and the Ameers on the presentation of this treaty. A striking but not unexpected incident marked its commencement (page 132). "After a profusion of civilities, evidently forced, Meer Noor Mahomed produced a box, from which he took out all the treaties that had been entered into between the British and Hyderabad Governments. Showing them to me, one by one, he asked, *What is to become of all these?*"

Anticipating the possibility of a reference to these treaties, "with the object of contrasting their provisions with those now tendered," Colonel Pottinger had furnished his deputy with the "simple answer, * * * that their failure, and not ours, had led to the change." Simple, indeed; with the simplicity of—truth? With that treaty before his eyes which opened the river of Sinde to commerce, and shut it to war, Lieutenant Eastwick did *not* make the answer contained in his chief's instructions; he merely referred Noor Mahomed to the first article of the proposed treaty, confirming all former agreements not cancelled by the present. (To which of these categories, the annulled, or the confirmed, did the

"eternal friendship" belong?) Noor Mahomed proceeded:—"Since the day that Sinde has been connected with the English, there has been always something new: your Government is never satisfied; we are anxious for your friendship, but we cannot be continually persecuted. We have given a road to your troops through our territories, and now you wish to remain. *This the Beloochees will never suffer.* But still we might even arrange this matter, were we certain that we should not be harassed with other demands. There is the payment to the King, why can we obtain no answer on this point?" (That is, with reference to the *amount* which they were ultimately to pay.)

Noor Mahomed may have been a sad liar, but he seems to have advanced, under Colonel Pottinger's instruction, into a tendency towards speaking truth, or something very like it. The demands of the English had grown from commercial friendship to more than the sacrifice of political independence; if this were granted, why should they not ask more to-morrow, when better able to take it, if denied?

The Ameers were urged, in the words of the treaty, with considerations of the "vast advantages" which were likely to arise from the presence of the British force, both to themselves and to the people of Sinde: but on these points they showed a dulness, and, as far as regarded the people, a selfishness which greatly shocked the enlightened officer who was deputed to treat with them. "All this may be very true," replied Noor Mahomed, "but I do not under-

stand how it concerns *us;* what benefits do *we* derive from these changes? on the contrary, we shall suffer injury:" and much more in a similar tone. Alas! Lieutenant Eastwick! Can men be selfish? Can men prefer, and openly profess they prefer, their own interests to those of others? especially in the presence of a British envoy,—the very herald and apostle of the British Government's disinterested friendship.

Their ignorance, however, their slowness to grasp even the "commonest truths" of a philosophic policy, such for instance as "the prosperity of the subject is the strength of the ruler" (page 134), was yet more incomprehensible; and draws from Lieutenant Eastwick the following touching apostrophe: —"It is painful to the mind of a British subject, enjoying the blessings of British civilization, British laws, and British liberty, to reflect upon a nation languishing at this hour in such a miserable state of ignorance and degradation. He may be pardoned for expressing his humble hope that the time may not be far distant when the light of knowledge may reach their land, and the beams of science and philosophy break in upon them, to blaze at some happier period, in still later times, with full lustre." It is impossible not to smile at all this; it is impossible not to feel that the matter is sad earnest. The light of knowledge and the beams of philosophy most essential to the poor Ameers at present were, the knowledge of their own weakness, and the philosophy which would enable them to bear with equanimity whatever might be imposed on them. The "light"

of *this* "knowledge," the "beams" of *this* "philosophy," guided too by a high order of European "science," were already on their gentle way; flashing from ten thousand bayonets "blazing with full lustre" in the sun of Sinde. Nearer, perhaps, than the Ameers yet thought, nearer with every tread of the British army, the illuminating "beams" had not yet, however, "broken in upon them." The conference terminated unsatisfactorily; the subsequent messages of Lieutenant Eastwick could extract no decisive answer; the Ameers were said to be assembling their troops; they announced to the British agent that they could no longer be answerable for his safety; and on the 24th of January Lieutenant Eastwick found himself obliged to retire from Hyderabad.

Meanwhile, the excitement in the country was great and increasing; the roads were crowded by Beloochees hurrying to the capital; the chiefs "taunted Noor Mahomed for his cowardice, and openly declared that any one who would lead them against the English should be ruler of Sinde." The Bombay force advanced steadily up the Indus, to within two marches of Hyderabad; a strong detachment from the Bengal army moved rapidly down the Indus. Sir John Keane, in command of the Bombay force, already speculated with professional satisfaction on crossing the river and storming the Beloochee lines, as a "pretty piece of practice for the army," and a collision seemed inevitable. But the courage of the Ameers failed them; they had been, not once, but many times, warned, that if a shot were fired, the

country should pass from them; they had no reason to doubt that this promise would be kept by the British, if able; and they saw that the vivid words of Colonel Pottinger's threat to them were approaching to their literal fulfilment; they saw, as he had told them they should see, the British armies "ready to come from all quarters like the inundation of the Indus." They agreed to all the demands that had been or might be made upon them; they signed the Treaty of twenty-three Articles; they paid down at once ten lacs of rupees; the "golden prospects" of Captain Havelock were "blighted*;" the army of Bengal retraced its steps; the army of Bombay moved onwards unopposed; and on February 4th the British Resident could write, from Sir John Keane's "camp, opposite Hyderabad," that he considered our supremacy "finally and fully established in Sinde."

The accessory negotiation at Khyrpore had been conducted somewhat earlier, and with less difficulty, to an equally successful termination.

Roostum Khan, the chief Ameer of this State, an old man more than eighty, was, in the opinion of Sir Alexander, really well-disposed to the English; whether so or not, he was tolerably well aware of the hopelessness of opposition: his power was far inferior to that of the Hyderabad Ameers, for whom he felt no particular regard; he seems to have looked to connexion with us to relieve him from dependance on them; and in yielding to our last and

* See page 95.

most obnoxious demand upon himself, his principal pain seems to have arisen from the fear that they might not be subjected to any infliction equally disagreeable. This demand was for the possession, during the war, of the island fortress of Bukkur, on the Indus; the heart and key of his dominions, lying in the route of our troops to Shikarpore. The whole state of the case is shown in two lines of a despatch of Sir Alexander Burnes (p. 103). "*I am negotiating for the fortress of Bukkur, and think I have nailed it; if not, we must just take it. The poor chiefs of Khyrpore are civil, and well-inclined towards us.*" And yet more fully, in the subsequent declaration of the poor old man himself (p. 110), "He said, that in giving up Bukkur to the British, he had had to encounter great disgrace; that his tribe and his family were alike opposed to it; but that he was an old man, with but a few years to live, and it was to save his children and his tribe from ruin that he had years ago resolved on allying himself to us; that other invaders of India might be resisted, but if one of our armies were swept away, we could send another, and that such power induced him alike to fear and rely upon us; that he was henceforward the submissive and obedient servant of the British, and hoped I would avert all injury befalling him, and tell him, without hesitation, what he could do to please us. The answer to such a declaration was plain, to give us orders for supplies, and place all the country, as far as he could, at our command; and he has done so, as far as he can."

Poor Roostum Khan! had all your countrymen been like you, thanks would never have been voted for the battle of Meeanee. His ready consent obtained him one favour. He was actually exempted from his share of the payment to Shah Soojah: and why?—"In consequence of the more friendly disposition he has manifested towards the *British* Government, and the valuable cession *to us* of the fort of Bukkur*;"—an honest avowal, at last, of the real meaning of the pecuniary demand on behalf of *Shah Soojah*, which services *to us* could cancel. The mind will cling to a gratifying thought when it can find one; and here it is pleasing to hope that poor Roostum was both negatively consoled by the exception for himself, and positively made happy by the fleecing of his brethren.

Here we may pause for a few words of retrospect, and ask whether, through the course of the proceedings which have been sketched, our conduct can be considered as regulated by any law or principle except one—the principle of bending all considerations before the interest of the stronger?

The Ameers were unwilling to let our armies march through their country. Granted: but so was Runjeet Singh, "our old and faithful ally." His refusal to permit our passage it was which made the demand on the Ameers necessary. If any one can discern a reason for disregarding the scruples of the one party, and respecting those of the other, except

* Letter from the Secretary, March 14, 1839, p. 182.

their comparative strength; that is, except our interest, he is bound to point it out to the world.

"But they intrigued with Persia." But the very existence of Noor Mahomed's letter to the Shah, whatever it may have meant, was not even known to the Indian Government till long after the first transmission of their demands on Sinde. The same communication which "suspended" the Treaty, called on the Ameers for "concessions" as "sincere friends," and "near neighbours." Neighbours, indeed! but not as the wounded man to the *Samaritan*.

It was with reference to this point of the passage of our armies through the territory of Sinde assumed to be neutral, that Sir Robert Peel made his recent and remarkable declaration, that the rules of international morality received in Europe were not always strictly capable of application in India,—a declaration in which he afterwards complained he had been misunderstood; and certainly it is a declaration which admits of a good deal of misunderstanding in more than one direction. "It was difficult," Sir Robert Peel is also reported to have said on the same occasion, "when Russia was intriguing against England in India, to say calmly, I look at my Vattel and my Puffendorf, and I refrain from marching my troops across a neutral territory."

It may certainly be less difficult to say calmly, "I look at my own interests and my own strength, and I march where I will, suspending what treaties I will." But if Vattel and Puffendorf have laid down a right rule, their rule ought to be followed, whe-

ther calmly or not; and though the way be difficult, yet Sir Robert Peel, bound as he once was to Oxford, by the tie, not only of Protestantism, but also of classical scholarship, knows from both sources, from Hesiod and from the New Testament, that it is the *other* way which is easy*.

The assertion that barbarous or half-civilized states have, as against civilized powers, no rights whatever, is plain and intelligible; it is one which has been maintained before now, but it is not one which Sir Robert Peel may be expected to maintain. If, then, it is to be admitted that Asiatic states have any rights at all, analogous to those possessed by European states, it is difficult to imagine a ground for dealing with those rights in a different manner. The very idea of rights implies this. The rights of a party exact a certain line of conduct from all who acknowledge them, and similar rights exact similar conduct. If the conduct of the one party be such as to absolve the other from the obligation to observe these rights, a new state of things arises; and a code of international law must be incomplete if it does not include the solution of any difficulties which may thus arise, under the head of either a rule or exception. Such exceptions may apparently contradict the rule; if both are based on justice, they cannot contradict it in reality; but every particular case of exception, to be allowed, must be made out.

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* Τήν μέν τοι κακότητα καὶ ἰλαδὸν ἔστιν ἑλέσθαι
Ῥηιδίως· λείη μεν ὁδος, μάλα δ' ἐγγυθι ναίει.
Works and Days, 285.

The occurrence of such apparent exceptions, however, is not confined to Asia or to India. Alleged violations of the rights of neutrality have occurred in every European war since Vattel was published, and will probably occur again; they have been either defended or condemned as indefensible. All men have heard of the English fleet at neutral Copenhagen, of the French armies in neutral Prussia or Switzerland. Such cases may be capable of justification, and if so, and if Vattel is worth anything, they may be justified consistently with the principles of Vattel.

Belligerents have no right to interfere with the territories of a neutral power without its consent. Let this be admitted to be the general rule; are we to add, except when these territories are in Asia? except when one of the belligerents is Christian, and the neutral power Mahometan? If not, wherein does the exception consist in the case of the Ameers of Sinde?

If there is a distinguishing circumstance in their case, in it must be sought the ground of the exception. There is one such circumstance,—is the exception based on this,—the sole visible distinction? —that the rights of objecting to the passage of armies, which they might otherwise have had as neutrals, were secured to them by an express guarantee? Sir Robert must have forgotten this, when he spoke of the neutral rights of the Ameers as dependent only on Puffendorf and Vattel. They depended also on the recorded pledge of the Indian

Government, deliberately given, not for nothing, but in return for an equivalent; that equivalent being a concession made by the Ameers of Sinde at the express "request" of the Indian Government. A pledge so obtained and so given, ought not to be quite valueless even when given to some *caput lupinum* of an Asiatic chief, who never heard of the rights of neutrals as laid down in Puffendorf or Vattel.

Let the necessity of our passage for the object in question, the invasion of Affghanistan, be assumed. It is at least obvious that the Ameers' objecting to it was so natural, so inevitable, that it needed no excuse and merited no penalty. In bare justice every possible exertion should have been made to overcome their scruples by fair means, to make endurable a course which could not be other than unacceptable. The jealousy which did not even interrupt the close alliance between ourselves and Runjeet Singh, was no crime in a weaker power, less able to guard itself, and less used to deal with us, and therefore yet more distrustful of our intentions; yet it was regarded from the beginning as a crime, —a crime which entitled us to exact a penalty.

Attention has already been directed to the "suspension" of the treaty of 1832; and it is obvious how much this direct violation of an existing agreement must have tended to increase the distrust which the demand would at any rate have been calculated to produce. How could the Ameers be sure that the passage of the army was all that was

intended? How rely on the assurance of the British that no harm was meant to them; when the demand, unsoftened by the offer of any advantage, itself involved a positive, unequivocal, literal, breach of agreement? They were told that circumstances had arisen which made it necessary that the treaty should be set aside. It was just because those circumstances had arisen that the treaty became important to the rulers of Sinde. Would there have been any sense in a provision that the British were never to lead their armies through Sinde—except when they thought it necessary? Necessary or not, the demand was a breach of treaty, and no argument can change its character. Would it not have been but scant justice to offer to the rulers of Sinde some price for their consent,—to attempt to soothe, even at the cost of some sacrifice, the jealousy which had dictated the "suspended" conditions, and which could not but be multiplied ten-fold by their suspension? Make the very worst of their intrigues with Persia; then compare their position and our position,—their strength and our strength,—their morality and our morality, and say whether their futile intrigues can be weighed for a moment against our treaty-suspending, money-exacting, demand.

The Ameers were asked to place themselves in the absolute power of an ally which was even then breaking its agreement. No nation that ever existed would have conceded such demands without some equivalent, if it could reject them with impunity. But they could not have been made on such a

nation, or if made, not persisted in. They *were* persisted in; they were coupled with no offer of an equivalent; they were coupled, on the contrary, with the demand for money,—a demand not more obnoxious than unnecessary; the resistance roused by this combination was not soothed by concessions, but threatened with indefinite punishment: and the punishment ultimately inflicted was the loss of independence; for the justice of states is the interest of the stronger.

Enough has, perhaps, been said as to the justice and as to the motives of the pecuniary demand, but not enough as to the manner in which the British Government combined hypocrisy with its oppression. It treated *this* as a question between the Ameers and Shah Soojah; talked perpetually of its own disinterestedness; its hopes of prevailing on him to lower his demand "to a reasonable amount;" its wish that the Ameers should appreciate the value of the "boon" which it was holding out to them. "*We* do not exact this;" such was the tenor of their reasoning; "*we* want nothing of you,—but wait till you see Shah Soojah at Cabool; perhaps he might then claim more of you: we should be very sorry to see you, our old friends, so ill treated. We advise you as friends; but if you don't pay, we wash our hands of the consequences." How they dealt with the releases produced has been already seen. Apprehensive of what the demand might grow to if unsettled, the Ameers often requested them to fix the exact amount. This they would never do before

the final rupture at Hyderabad. "Settle it with the Shah," they said; "*he* is the party interested,—he and you, not we." As if that miserable and perjured slave of the English had in the matter a will or a judgment of his own*; as if he dared ask a rupee more or a rupee less than was set down for him in an English memorandum.

We need hardly say that the sum to be paid, the proportions in which it was to be paid, the exceptions partial or otherwise from payment, were ultimately fixed, and the whole business carried out, as it had been begun, by the British Government alone. Looking at the whole of this business of the money, from beginning to end,—the injustice, the hypocrisy, the low motives to which alone it is possible to attribute it, there really appears to be nothing recorded in the history of the British Government in Asia at once so wicked and so mean, since the time when Hastings let out the army of India for hire to slaughter the Rohillas.

The Treaty of twenty-three Articles, which the Ameers of Hyderabad had accepted from Colonel Pottinger, was not confirmed by the Indian Government. Another of fourteen Articles, generally similar, but somewhat more stringent in its terms, was substituted for it, and after some demur, finally accepted by the Ameers; their remonstrances against what appeared to them the hardship of some of its pro-

* Perjured, if Colonel Pottinger's interpretation of the releases were correct; and perjured too by the instigation of the British Government.

visions being kept up until our successes in Affghanistan, appeared to remove all prospect of a change for the better.

The main provisions and objects of the Treaty cannot be more shortly recapitulated than they are by Lord Auckland, in his letter (page 181) to the Secret Committee.

"I may be permitted to offer my congratulations to you upon this timely settlement of our relations with Sinde, by which our *political and military ascendancy in that province is now finally declared and confirmed.* The main provisions of the proposed engagements are, that the confederacy of the Ameers is virtually dissolved, each chief being upheld in his own possessions, and bound to refer his differences with the other chiefs to our arbitration; that Sinde is placed formally under British protection, and brought within the circle of our Indian relations; that a British force is to be placed in Lower Sinde at Tatta, or such other point to the westward of the Indus as the British Government may determine; a sum of three lacs of rupees per annum, in aid of the cost of this force, being paid in equal proportions by the three Ameers, Meer Noor Mahomed Khan, Meer Nusseer Mahomed Khan, and Meer Meer Mahomed Khan; and that the navigation of the Indus, from the sea to the most northern point of the Sinde territory, is rendered free of all toll. These are objects of high undoubted value, *and especially so when acquired without bloodshed:* as the first advance towards that consolidation of our influence, and ex-

tension of the general benefits of commerce, throughout Affghanistan, which form the great end of our designs."

Alas! for the "great end" of these two-fold designs on Affghanistan; for the commerce which was to bless peace, and the power which was to be consolidated by war! The olive branch of commerce was withered before it was planted, and the sword of war, which it strove to cover, was broken at last.

The language of Lord Auckland respecting the effecting our objects in Sinde without bloodshed, is the natural, and doubtless, sincere language of humanity; but the threat of war may be an instrument of injustice, hardly less potent than the infliction of war. Moreover, though the armed men were not yet sprung up, the dragon's teeth were sown: and the fields of Meeanee were yet to see the reaping of a stern and plenteous harvest.

The terms of the treaty above sketched, apply in strictness only to the Ameers of Hyderabad; the Ameers of Khyrpore, with one exception, were not held liable to contribute to the payment of the subsidiary force, and their chief was left in the possession of the rights of headship; but in most respects they stood on a similar footing. The exception was Meer Moobaruck, who had shown a more hostile disposition than the others. He was also required to pay a portion of the sum demanded on behalf of the Shah; but neither the one nor the other was ever actually paid; his remonstrances and representations of inability to pay, and subsequently those of

his heir, Meer Nusseer, keeping the question unsettled even up to 1842. A treaty, on the usual terms of tribute and protection, was afterwards entered into with the chief of Meerpore. The chief points actually held in force by the British, during the subsequent events, were, in Lower Sinde, the Fort of Kurachee; in Upper Sinde, Sukkur, including the fortress of Bukkur, and Shikarpore; these last being in the route to Candahar, and so connected with the occupation of Affghanistan.

Henceforth, therefore, the position of the Ameers of Sinde towards the British Government was changed. Our tributary allies, having, indeed, the full power of government within their dominions, but beyond the limits of the country expressly bound to take no step, to communicate with no foreign power without our knowledge; their political importance, yet further diminished by the breaking up of the Hyderabad confederacy, by the declaration of their internal equality, by the provision for our mediation; they were henceforth, in fact, as they were told they were by nature, an integral portion of the empire of Hindostan; and the jealously guarded river of Sinde had become a river of Hindostan. The British Government, as paramount sovereign of that empire, was legally entitled henceforth to call their intrigues against it, treason—their resistance to its political commands, rebellion. In this state they were left by Lord Auckland; in this state they were found by Lord Ellenborough.

How this object had been attained it is not neces-

sary to repeat; but the thing was done. The first great step was taken. One person, at least, and that one a leading actor in the transactions already related, a man of no ordinary talent and foresight, saw already what our next step would be if we were driven to take another. The words which follow have no signature, but they occur in a long letter dated "Sinde Residency, February 13th, 1839."—(p. 152).

"I beg to distinctly record that I anticipate no such event; but if we are ever again obliged to exert our military strength in Sinde, it must be carried to subjugating this country."

The event has happened; the expected result has followed; and a letter, dated in 1843, has appeared in print denouncing the result as an atrocity. That letter is attributed to a name which in the former case the date enables us to supply; the name of H. Pottinger. It is difficult to repress a doubt whether the letter of 1843 is genuine.

The next chapter will trace the events which led to the failure of Colonel Pottinger's anticipation, and the fulfilment of his conditional prophecy.

SINDE IN 1842 AND 1843.

Δὶς μὲν ὀρέξατ' ἰὼν, τὸ δὲ δεύτερον ἵκετο τέκμωρ.

Two strides the Lord of Ocean made. The second reached the goal.

From the conclusion of the treaties of 1839, to the commencement of the events which led to the annexation of Sinde to the British dominions, the outline of its history is simple. The Ameers quarrelled now and then with each other, and the Political Agent had to set them right. They committed perpetual breaches of the commercial part of the treaty, were duly found fault with, apologized, and repeated the offence; they occasionally intrigued against the British, but with no result, except that of showing a continued dislike to our dominion; and perhaps with no very definite purpose beyond that of letting slip no opportunity which might arise of shaking it off. Their eyes were steadily directed towards Cabool, and the barometer of their kindly dispositions rose and fell pretty accurately, as the horizon in the north-west was stormy or favourable.

Some personal changes took place among them; of which the principal was the death of Noor Mahomed, in December, 1810. He had of late, with apparent sincerity, identified his own interest with

that of the British; and the last act of his life (affectingly told in the Correspondence, page 267) was to commend his two sons and successors to the protection of the British Resident, Major Outram, for whom he felt a strong personal friendship; a commission which that noble soldier fulfilled, and more than fulfilled. "You are to me as my brother, Nusseer Khan," said the Ameer to him, in words stamped with the sincerity of death. * * * "From the days of Adam, no one has known so great truth and friendship as I have found in you." To have merited this touching testimony from the rude and distrustful chieftain, is more than to have been called by the conqueror of Sinde, "the Bayard of the Indian army."

In one point, this death was of importance. Nusseer Khan, the next brother of Noor Mahomed, would as such have succeeded to the headship of Lower Sinde, but for our policy of breaking up the Hyderabad confederacy, and placing all its members on an equal footing. He had before been active in opposition to us, and some detected intrigues of his were passed over with lenity; but henceforth he is said to have looked on the British as keeping him out of his birthright, and to have been more than ever our enemy.

The generally uneventful character, however, of the Correspondence relative to these two years (1840, 1841) indicates that they passed over on the whole pretty smoothly: but a more critical time was at hand.

On the 10th January, 1842, Major Outram writes thus, to Lieutenant Postans, his Assistant Political Agent at Shikarpore:—"We are fortunately becoming stronger at Sukkur and Shikarpore, daily, or there is no knowing *how far the Ameers might be excited by the disastrous accounts from Cabool when the truth can no longer be disguised. Do not relax in the canals and other public works; we must show that nothing can discompose us down here.*"

Such was the impression of a sincere friend to the Ameers, respecting our doubtful position with them at this time; and it soon appeared that Major Outram judged rightly. The rising of Cabool, the destruction of our army, could not fail to suggest to the Ameers the thought that, the power of the British was not irresistible; that their supremacy, even after it had been established, might be overthrown.

A letter from Lieutenant Leckie to the Political Agent*, describes vividly the immediate change in the demeanour of Meer Nusseer Khan, of Hyderabad, evidently traceable to this cause, and that the Ameer, at least, appears to have lost no time in commencing a system of hostile intrigues. Seven days from the date of the letter just quoted from Major Outram, his deputy sends him notice of the interception of a letter, of a very suspicious character, and fully believed by him, though never positively proved, to be Nusseer Khan's.

* *Sinde Correspondence*, page 310.

At this very time an amicable negotiation was in progress for the transfer of Shikarpore, the chief mart of Upper Sinde, in farm, to the British, on advantageous terms to the Ameers. They were to receive a revenue higher by one-fifth than the place had ever yielded to them; the other party looked for the advantages of their side of the bargain, to the expected growth of commerce, and the security of their position on the Indus. The negotiation was far advanced, when it was at once suspended, in consequence of the altered tone of Meer Nusseer Khan (who conducted it on behalf of himself and the other Ameers of Hyderabad), and the obstacles thrown by him in the way of its completion; an indication not to be mistaken of the feelings roused by the intelligence from Affghanistan. "See," Nusseer Khan is reported to have said to Meer Roostum, of Khyrpore, the head of Upper Sinde, "the Affghans have got rid of the English through their bravery; we are not inferior to them; let us show them that we have spirit and courage*." Secret communications were opened with the hill-tribes of the passes; secret combinations with each

* Statements given to the Political Agent, page 335, &c. These statements are not always of a character to be relied upon as far as any particular fact is concerned; but coming simultaneously from various quarters, and corroborated by various circumstances, there can be no doubt that they fully warrant the entire conviction of the Political Agents (expressed by none more strongly than by Major Outram), that various intrigues were in progress of a character hostile to the British.

other entered into; secret attempts were, there can be little doubt, made to concert hostile movements with Shere Singh, the ruler of the Punjaub.

It was natural, inevitable; but it was fatal. That there was any moral crime in their desire to drive us from their country, no one will assert; that the breach—even the treacherous breach—of treaties imposed as these had been, merits to be viewed by those who imposed them, with any deep moral indignation, no one can maintain.

But supposing their object to have been legitimate, and legitimately sought, was it one to which the Governor-general could accede? To impose a treaty by compulsion, and after that treaty has for some time existed, to exact penalties for its violation, are two very different proceedings. The first may be gratuitous injustice: the second *must be*, of necessity, one horn of a difficult dilemma. And though justice requires that we should connect the first step with the second, when looking at the conduct of a nation, it is necessary, in some degree, to separate them when looking at the conduct of the individual statesmen who are their respective instruments.

To evacuate the country during the campaign of 1842 in Affghanistan, would have been impossible; to evacuate it afterwards (if it ever was seriously contemplated, of which there are certainly some indications*), a course, under the circumstances, beset with

* *Supplementary Correspondence*, page 99.

difficulties. A second, and not a friendly, withdrawal, would undoubtedly have increased the effect of our retirement from Affghanistan. That the sovereign power of India should reward the hostility of allies with independence, would have been felt by all India as a confession of weakness to punish them. This consideration, however, belongs to a somewhat later period than the date of Lord Ellenborough's arrival in India.

Lord Ellenborough found the British empire in India staggering from an unexpected shock; the opinion of our strength shaken, the reputation of our army tarnished, the sepoys, for the first time, actually shrinking from encounter with an Asiatic enemy.

The crisis was one to try the real strength of our hold on the princes and people of Hindoostan. It was the time for the ambitious to hope, for the disaffected to combine; it was the last time at which the paramount power could look with indifference on individual instances of disaffection.

The Mahomedan millions scattered through the country, from whom the dominion of the Indian peninsula had passed to the English; the Mahomedan rulers, who were our political dependants, heard of the great victory gained by the Mahomedan Affghans; we know, in some degree, and can well imagine for the rest, with what feelings they heard it. In the map of India published by the Society for the Diffusion of Useful Knowledge, the States marked as under "British protection," distinguished

from those which constitute "British possessions," are in number more than twenty. We held Sinde by a tenure similar to that which connects us with them. Few of them, it may be hoped, have been added to our virtual empire by means so indefensible; but their legal relation to us was the same.

The rulers of Sinde were bound by treaty to allegiance; the breach of that allegiance presented the choice of only two alternatives:—a choice identical with that which would have been presented by the defection of any subsidiary Indian power;—of relinquishing the claim, or enforcing and maintaining it; an end to which punishment of the breach might or might not be essential, according to the circumstances. This is a broad but sufficient enunciation of the problem which Lord Ellenborough had to solve. The iniquity of the original compulsion increases our compassion for the ultimate result, but does not alter the nature of the alternatives left to their successor by those who imposed the allegiance.

The first step taken by Lord Ellenborough, with reference to the Ameers of Sinde, was, in accordance with his resolution to maintain the position we had acquired on the Indus. Having received from the Resident in Sinde a distinct statement that some of the Ameers were engaged in hostile intrigues, he proceeded to send Major Outram an address to these princes, to be delivered or withheld according to that officer's discretion. The main object may be gathered from the concluding paragraph.

"I should be most reluctant to believe that you had deviated from the course which is dictated by your engagements; I will confide in your fidelity and in your friendship, until I have proof of your faithlessness, and of your hostility in my hands; but be assured that, if I should obtain such proofs, no consideration shall induce me to permit you to exercise, any longer, a power you will have abused. On the day on which you shall be faithless to the British Government, sovereignty will have passed from you; your dominions will be given to others; and in your destitution all India will see that the British Government will not pardon an injury received from one it believes to be its friend."

This letter is dated May 6, 1842, and if ever such a letter could be justified, it was so by the circumstances of that time.

Major Outram kindly as well as prudently thought it better to withhold a threat which might drive these princes, all conscious of having subjected themselves already to the penalties denounced, into combined and open hostility; and Lord Ellenborough (by letter dated June 4th) approved of his so withholding it. The letter, therefore, led to no immediate result; but the principle it expressed was the basis of what followed, and it has therefore been given above.

Time passed on, and our successes in Affghanistan, renewing the fear of our strength, kept down the smouldering fire of disaffection during the summer of 1842. But we were about to withdraw from

Affghanistan; and it appears from the Blue Book that the intrigues which had slackened were renewed, in consequence of the impression produced by the news of our intended withdrawal*. If our position on the Indus was to be maintained, without the constant presence of an overpowering force, it may well have appeared necessary to show the Ameers that the treaties which placed us there were not to be broken with impunity. Something was due to those for whom we had opened the navigation of the Indus; something, too, was due to the future safety of our garrisons.

Sir C. Napier took the command in Sinde in September, 1842, with the understanding, that what is called in India a "revisal" of the treaties with the Ameers was at hand; the functions of the Political Agent being at the same time superseded: a step at such a crisis, of very questionable policy.

In the previous remarks the hostility of the Ameers during the year 1842 has been taken as an acknowledged fact. If the Ameers were not guilty of hostile intrigues they of course cease to be applicable; and as the character of the proceedings from September 1842 to February 1843 rests to some extent, though not altogether, upon this point, it is proper to consider shortly, before going farther, the various opinions respecting it which have been maintained.

* Minute by the Governor of Bombay, page 353.

Not only in the House of Commons, on the occasion of Lord Ashley's late motion, but even in the debates at the India House, where the speakers are, perhaps, as well informed on these matters, many doubts were expressed as to the cogency of the evidence brought forward in proof of the hostile intrigues of the Ameers. The letters especially exhibiting proofs of dangerous intrigues with different parties; these it was urged by some eloquent and *learned* friends of the Ameers were not sufficiently "proved" to be legally admissible in evidence. Now, whether the "treasonable" letter alleged to be written by Meer Roostum of Khyrpore to Shere Sing was written by his minister, with or without his privacy; whether the treasonable letter, professedly addressed by Meer Nusseer of Hyderabad to a hill chief, was demonstrably written by the Ameer; these seem to be questions which the state of things in those countries, the frequency of forgeries, the copiousness of false-swearing, might render very difficult of decision even for those personally acquainted with the circumstances and the men. But those who were so, certainly decided that the letters were what they professed to be. That the Ameers denied having written them is really a matter of course; it has no weight whatever towards the decision of this particular point. There is at page 474 of the *Correspondence* a letter addressed by Meer Nusseer Khan to Sir Charles Napier, which contains his energetic denial of having written the treasonable letter, or even having ever

heard the name of his supposed correspondent*. It contains also the following passage, which, spite of the sadness of the subject, it is impossible to read without considerable amusement. The Ameer is referring to his conduct in former times:—

"Subsequently, I and Meer Noor Mahomed Khan saw the advantage of seeking the protection of the wisest and most powerful nation on the earth, and therefore urged Sir Henry Pottinger, during two whole years to come into the country, *after which we finally succeeded in introducing a British force.*"

The Ameer's object appears to be to argue from this version of the facts of 1839, that he is necessarily incapable of having done the hostile act in question, or any other. The soundness of the premiss is not such as to recommend the inference to our absolute acceptance. Have we any right to bear severely on the poor Ameer's mendacity? No, indeed; but this is a question of fact, and on such a question it is right to show that his statement can be worth little.

It was important to establish the authenticity of these letters, not as containing the whole case against the Ameers, but as distinct single instances of a manifold system of intrigue, of the existence of which there can be no doubt, unless all the political agents in Sinde were utterly misled and misinformed.

* "God is my witness," he says, "that up to this moment I know not whether the name you mention is that of a man or of a whole tribe;" an assertion which hardly sounds credible. It is an attempt to prove too much.

Their testimony to the covert hostility of the Ameers, and especially of the one above mentioned, Meer Nusseer of Hyderabad, already in a certain sense the leading chief of the Hyderabad Ameers, and the aspirant to the actual headship of Lower Sinde, is as positive and strong as general testimony can be. All, without exception, speak in the same manner. Major Outram, whose authority has been appealed to by the advocates of the Ameers in this country, not only repeatedly expresses this belief in his letters, but was so satisfied that their conduct had been such as to justify the British Government in requiring a revisal of the treaties, that he himself drew up a draft of the requisitions to be made upon them in a new treaty, with the fact of their "treasonable correspondence with a view to the expulsion of the British from Sinde*," deliberately stated in the preamble.

It does not appear that Lord Ellenborough can be fairly charged with having been careless on this point. His statement to the contrary contained in the defence of his general course addressed by him in June, 1843, to the Secret Committee†, is fairly borne out by the tenor of the instructions addressed by him to the British agents in Sinde. A letter addressed to Sir C. Napier on his proceeding to take the command in September, 1842, contains these words:—"Your first political duty will be to hear all that Major Outram and the other political agents

* June 21st, page 342.
† *Supplementary Correspondence*, page 98.

may have to allege against the Ameers of Hyderabad and Khyrpore, tending to prove the intention on the part of any of them to act hostilely against the British army. That they may have had hostile feelings there can be no doubt. It would be impossible to believe that they could entertain friendly feelings; but we should not be justified in inflicting punishment upon the thoughts."

"Impossible," indeed, yet the distinction is a just one; just, even though neither the thought nor the action were unmerited by the conduct of the English. The question of the authenticity of these letters was referred by the Governor-general to Sir C. Napier, "on whose sense of justice he had the fullest reliance*," and who, aided on the spot by the opinion and advice of those who from their position and circumstances were fittest to decide the point "was infinitely more competent to form a correct conclusion than I could be at Simla." This is really self-evident.

Sir Charles Napier's ultimate conviction was, that "every letter was written by the Ameers, and that nothing is wanted but an opportunity to attack us; I mean as regards Meer Nusseer Khan of Hyderabad and Meer Roostum Khan of Khyrpore†." The first conclusion, though not actually demonstrated, rests on the positive judgment of those best able to judge, and little doubt can be felt as to the second. In truth, their hostility was too natural to

* *Supplementary Correspondence*, page 99.

† Page 462.

be improbable, and it appears to be sufficiently proved.

Two points then must be assumed as the basis of what followed; that our position on the Indus was to be maintained, and that the acts of the leading Ameers had been decidedly though secretly hostile. The steps taken in consequence require separate consideration.

Sir C. Napier, as has been said, arrived in Sinde in September; and on October 25th he sends his view of the state of things there to Lord Ellenborough, in a letter, (No. 379, page 362 of the *Sinde Correspondence*,) beginning with the marked words, "It is not for me to consider how we came to occupy Sinde,"—a clever and downright, but very one-sided letter, which no one can read without feeling that the writer is too much on the side of "civilization,"—too entirely determined to benefit these unfortunate people, even at the cannon's mouth, whether they will or no.

Here is paragraph 19 of the letter:—"To their selfish feelings and avarice, and love of hunting, are such great general interests to be sacrificed? I think not. The real interests of the Ameers themselves demand that their puerile pursuits and blind avaricious proceedings should be subjected to a wholesome control, which their breaches of treaties and our power give us at this moment a lawful right to exercise, and the means of peaceably enforcing. If any civilized man were asked the question, 'Were you the ruler of Sinde, what would you do?' his

answer would be, 'I would abolish the tolls upon the rivers, make Kurachee a free port, protect Shikarpore from robbers, make Sukkur a mart for trade on the Indus. I would make a trackway along its banks; I would get steam-boats.' *Yet all this is what the Ameers dread.*"

Steam-boats, commerce, humanity, relief of the impoverished people, are all on one side; and doubtless there is much to be said for steam-boats, commerce, humanity, and removal of poverty. But on the other side is "coercion," and the good to be expected from the coercion ought not to have made the General forget that coercion is a painful process to the coerced, even for objects the most just and necessary. A revisal, to a certain extent, of the treaties was just, if their breach could make it so, and necessary, perhaps, if our position in Sinde was to be maintained secure from the recurrence of similar violations. But it was impossible that *both* parties, at least, could forget the question, which "it was not for Sir Charles Napier to consider," "how we came to occupy Sinde?"

The suggestions of this letter, based as they were upon previous communications from Lord Ellenborough, were in many respects identical with the demands ultimately made upon the Ameers by the new treaty. They were shortly, territory for ourselves, (for our own good and that of the people of Sinde and traders on the Indus;) territory for our friends, (as a penalty on the Ameers); the right of cutting wood for the steamers on the Indus, for the

benefit of all whom it concerned; to which was afterwards added in the treaty the right of coinage, for the commercial convenience of India in general.

These were the general and simple objects; but the particular arrangements by which they were to be attained, were complicated to a degree which renders it difficult even to discover what they were; singularly difficult to give an account of them at once consistent with truth, clearness, and brevity; and perhaps most difficult of all to estimate fairly their moral character. Some appear reasonable, and some not; some moderately and some excessively severe. The enquiry is entangled and bewildering; any one who would explain its results must hope and try to be just, though he must despair of avoiding being tiresome.

The territory to be ceded to us consisted of Sukkur, including the fortress of Bukkur, and the town of Roree on the Indus, all in Upper Sinde; in Lower Sinde the port of Kurachee: each with a moderate arrondissement; (Tatta too was included in the draft, but afterwards relinquished;) all of these posts occupied by our troops; the principal object being to secure the military command of the river and protection of its commerce.

In return for the proposed cessions, the British Government gave up its claim to the tribute paid by the Ameers of Lower Sinde towards the expences of maintaining the subsidiary force. The territory to be occupied by us in Lower Sinde, (and, indeed, in

both divisions,) was far from equivalent to this tribute; the surplus, or land to its value, was to be at our disposal; some of it was to be made over to such of the Ameers of Upper Sinde as were looked upon as comparatively clear of offence, in compensation for their interest in the ceded lands; and some to Meer Sobdar, partly in compensation for his share of Kurachee, and partly as a gift. He had remained faithful to us hitherto, and was therefore to gain by the transaction.

Thus far, therefore, none of the Ameers of Lower Sinde were to suffer in revenue. One was to gain, the rest were to give land in exchange for tribute; part of which only was to be retained in our own hands; the surplus was to be applied to compensate the cession of Upper Sinde, and was expected to be more than sufficient to indemnify all whom it was not intended to punish. The British Government would lose in immediate revenue, but gain in security of position and in power of protecting the commerce of the Indus.

There can be no doubt that the commercial provisions of the Treaty of 1839 had been frequently, and in some respects, vexatiously violated. A part of the Correspondence is occupied with a series of appeals from the aggrieved traders to the English Representatives, against the exactions of the Ameers, and the misconduct of their subordinates. Some of these appeals proceeded from foreign traders, some from their own subjects, and the latter especially caused perpetual irritation. Taking advantage of that article

of the treaty which declared them supreme in their own dominions, the Amers protested, though from the beginning corrected as to the undoubted intention of the *imposers* of the treaty, that it gave us no right to exempt their own subjects from tolls. If our position on the Indus, and with our position the right of a free trade, which we had professed to secure to others, was to be maintained, no alteration in the existing state of things could be so permanently effective as the holding in our own right and under our own government, certain points of territory.

The exchange by the British Government of tribute for territory was noticed in the last debate on Affghanistan and Sinde, as a mere "difference of policy" between Lord Auckland and Lord Ellenborough. It is so; and the motives of this preference, some of which Lord Ellenborough himself tells us at page 438 of the Correspondence, if they do not absolutely command assent, are certainly very strong. The cession of territory is done at once and over; the payment of tribute is a lasting hardship; a source of ever recurring irritation to the rulers, a cause and pretext of increased exactions on their part from the people. There is, too, another consideration which ought not here to be forgotten: that to the people it is in general a real benefit to exchange the government of a native power for that of the British. In the papers before us it is repeatedly, not stated by way of eulogy, but assumed as a positive and recognised basis for calculation, that when a part of the land of a country like Sinde passes into the

power of the British; into that land cultivators flock from the surrounding districts, the produce increases, wealth and population grow together; a testimony which, with all that can be said against our conduct to the Heads of States, we may yet hope is frequently true. And if it is true, the preference of territory over tribute of an equal value is, as far as the people are concerned, the preference of their direct advantage to their injury; injury, too, which, though it proceeds indirectly from ourselves, we have no power to alleviate. These considerations do not of course justify an otherwise unjust demand on a State; they do not alter or affect in the slightest degree the nature of our original dealings with the Ameers. But they do point to the objects which, consistently with due regard for rights, it ought to be the aim of our policy to effect; and, always supposing that the revisal of the treaties was justifiable, they are applicable to the position in which Lord Ellenborough found himself.

If the Indian Government had stopped here, it might fairly have claimed the praise of lenity. But besides the cessions to the British, the Ameers were called upon to give up to the Khan of Bhawulpore a territory along the river; including the provinces of Subzulkote and Bhoong Bhara, wrested by them from his predecessor. Meer Nusseer Khan of Hyderabad and Meer Roostum of Khyrpore, esteemed the principal offenders, were the persons interested in these two districts and mulcted by their transfer; a penalty which the Governor-general justified in

each case mainly by the overt act of the treasonable letters. With the claim of Bhawulpore upon these provinces, of course the British Government had originally nothing to do; but on the hypothesis that these Ameers had merited this degree of punishment, the mode seems in this case, also, to have been judicious; at once punishing a breach of allegiance and rewarding the fidelity of more than one generation, by the restoration of an ancient possession to the family of Bhawulpore; whose claim had, it appears, never been relinquished until the Ameers became our protected tributaries in 1839*. Major Outram does not appear to have thought the transfer of Subzulkote by any means a severe penalty on Meer Nusseer, who owned two-thirds of it; we find him writing thus in June:—"I consider the making over of Subzulkote to the Khan of Bhawulpore, a most desirable arrangement in every respect†."

But the territory demanded by the new treaty on behalf of the Khan of Bhawulpore was not limited to the ancient possessions of his family in Subzulkote and Bhoong Bhara. It extended southwards beyond Bhoong Bhara to Roree—one of the points to be occupied by the British; and included lands in which all the Ameers of Upper Sinde seem to have been more or less interested. The largest possessor was Meer Nusseer (of Khyrpore) son of the late Meer Moobaruck, the only Ameer of Upper Sinde on whom the British had since 1839 a claim for

* *Sinde Correspondence*, page 345, 444, &c.
† *Ib.*, page 345.

tribute, which, however, had remained in arrear. This chief is frequently named by Major Outram, together with his namesake of Hyderabad and Meer Roostum, as the most implicated in intrigues against the British; and he might therefore, perhaps, be considered liable to some penalty proportionate with theirs, especially as the treaty relieved him from all pecuniary claims, whether on account of the unsettled tribute, or of the demand on behalf of Shah Soojah left unpaid by his father.

These considerations might have warranted a slight addition to the territorial penalty inflicted by the loss of Subzulkote and Bhoong Bhara; but not such an addition as the terms of the draft of the revised treaty imposed. It is perfectly clear that through some misinformation or want of information the Governor-General, when he inserted in the draft "all the territories of the Ameers of Khyrpore, &c., intervening between the dominions of Bhawulpore and the town and district of Roree" was exacting a penalty far greater than he intended to exact*; the

* See Lord Ellenborough's letter to Sir C. Napier, dated November 4, the date also of the draft treaties with which it must have been transmitted. He states, in paragraph 13 of the letter, (p. 439, *Correspondence*,) that he is not informed of the exact value of this territory—and the paragraph itself, as well as other parts of the letter, indicates that the drafts of the revised treaties were not in this and in other respects meant to be positive and final arrangements. It is clear, however, that he greatly underrated the value of the district between Bhoong Bhara and Roree—for in the next paragraph, to meet the possibility of its belonging in part or wholly, not to the offending

main object being, as stated by himself, (*Correspondence*, p. 502,) to have a communication along the

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Meer Nusseer of Khyrpore, but to his brothers, he suggests that compensation might be made to them out of the surplus tribute, or of the lands received in exchange for it—a fund adequate enough to compensate a cession proportionate to that of Subzulkote or Bhoong Bhara, but wholly inadequate to meet the value, such as it afterwards turned out to be, of the district from Bhoong Bhara to Roree. The real value of the district does not appear to have been known even to Major Outram until the 24th of January, on which day he states its income, together with that of the other cessions as above, at more than six lacs, nearly one-third of the whole revenue of Upper Sinde, (p. 18, *Supplementary Correspondence*); and the whole territory transferred to Bhawulpore, apparently bore to the restored possessions the proportionate value of more than three to one.

For observe; the yearly tribute of Lower Sinde was three lacs; this was to be exchanged for equivalent land; of this land we were to keep Kurachee, valued at one lac, (and in the original draft Tatta also.) Meer Sobdar was to receive half a lac; there remained at most one and a half; to which must be added something for the interest of arrears of tribute; altogether making perhaps two lacs. This was the fund available for compensations.

Now the value of the cessions required from the Ameers of Upper Sinde turned out to be more than six lacs—of this the penalty imposed on Roostum by taking Bhoong Bhara and his share of Subzulkote was *less* than one.

Sukkur, Bukkur, and Roree, the places to be held by us, formed a very small part of the rest—and compensations were to be given to at least two of the Upper Sinde Ameers for their shares in these; reducing somewhat further the surplus fund.

The district between Bhoong Bhara and Roree made up the rest of the cession—and part, or possibly the whole of this was to be compensated (should it belong to the younger sons of Meer Moobaruck, and not to the eldest son Meer Nusseer) (paragraph 14 of the Governor-general's letter.) Out of what? out of the surplus fund remaining after previous deductions, and, it was even supposed that something might remain

Indus through a friendly country "rather than to inflict any farther punishment on the Ameers."

But it fell most severely upon the Ameers of Upper Sinde. "It has thrown them," Sir C. Napier says, "into consternation," (p. 502). It was evidently greater than could be considered in any way necessary or just for the purpose of punishment,—far greater than Major Outram, or even Sir C. Napier himself, when they had at length informed themselves of its value, (*Supplementary Correspondence*, p. 18,) thought it desirable to exact. They agreed in pressing upon Lord Ellenborough the reconsideration of this part of his arrangements, and he at once expressed, in a letter which will be found in p. 502 of the *Correspondence*, his readiness to attend to their opinion. But before this letter can have reached Sir C. Napier, the whole case had been tried by the judgment of the sword. The question will suggest itself, Had this letter been dated January 10, instead of February 10, would the battle of Meeanee have been fought? A question which must remain unanswered. This severity, apparently unintentional, but not therefore less unjust, is one of the most painful parts of the whole subject. It is a grave error to have been committed by a ruler: a most striking example of the injustice which is certain to follow upon anything like wholesale dealing with interests not perfectly comprehended.

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over to lessen the penalties after the compensations had been made. It is too clear that the revised treaty meant to take perhaps a lac where it took four or five.

The other main requisitions of the new treaty were the right of cutting wood (to be paid for) from the Ameers' shikargahs (hunting grounds) on the Indus, and the right of coinage. The establishment of an uniform currency throughout India seems to be a favourite project with the present Governor-general; and its commercial advantages are obvious. But the proposal to stamp the queen's head upon the coins of Sinde, was calculated, it is said, to interfere with the Mahometan abhorrence of idolatry, (p. 438,) and if so, as an additional and avoidable grievance, it was clearly wrong.

The attack on the valued shikargahs has been vehemently discussed; on the one side as a harsh interference with the Ameers, on the other as a laudable disregard of their selfish pleasures and prejudices. The Ameers certainly were game preservers to an unreasonable extent. Their vast tracts of wild land, it was said, even interfered with the spread of population,—a circumstance which has been noticed with very proper severity in England, where the extravagant love of field sports is unknown, where from the Norman Conquest up to the Spring Assizes of 1844, no such thing has ever been heard of as the loss of human life for the preservation of game. But the immediate importance popularly attributed to this question of the shikargahs hardly seems borne out by the papers presented to Parliament. It is frequently discussed between the Governor-general and his agents *before* the presentation of the new treaty, and never even mentioned after-

wards. The Ameers had, indeed, in former conversations with Colonel Pottinger spoken of the shikargahs as dearer to them than their wives and children; but all feeling on this point seems to have been lost in the greater grievances of the treaty. The right of cutting wood was, after all, very carefully limited, and only to be exercised in case the Ameers failed to supply a sufficient quantity ready cut for purchase. Those who judge from the Blue Book will think that the territorial cessions were the real penalty.

The general terms of the treaty, and the motives for exacting a penalty which would be felt, are thus shortly summed up by Lord Ellenborough, in a letter to the Secret Committee; November 19th, (p. 456).

"I am satisfied that in exchanging tribute for territory, in refraining from the acquisition of any territory on or beyond the Indus, which is not required for the purpose of possessing the command of that river, and in granting a great reward to our most faithful ally, the Khan of Bhawulpore, I have acted upon true principles of policy.

"To make the Ameers feel that the treaty with us was not to be violated with impunity, was, I thought, absolutely necessary. The British Government can make no concession before a native power which is collecting troops, nominally for defensive purposes, but which the slightest appearance of wavering on our part would direct to purposes of aggression."

A defence which does not meet the whole case: its partial force may be felt; but even by those most

disposed to accept it, it cannot be accepted without an uneasy feeling. It is impossible not to recollect that if treaties were "not to be violated with impunity" in 1842, treaties had been "suspended" with impunity in 1838: that if we had now strength and law on our side, we had then only the strength which made the law.

The address of General Napier to the Ameers of Upper and Lower Sinde, accompanying the presentation of the new treaty, is dated December 1st, 1842. From that period to the battle of Meeanee, in February, 1843, the Correspondence discloses a series of events singularly confused and intricate, an aspect of affairs changing every day. For some time previously, the preparations of the Ameers had been threatening; on the announcement of these terms they did not cease to be so. They professed readiness to accede, but still collected troops; they received the remonstrances of Sir Charles Napier, they professed to acquiesce in them; but they still collected troops. "*Oh, kind friend!*" "God knows, we have no intention of opposing the British, nor a thought of war or fighting. We have not the power." (page 473). Such was the style of their correspondence with the English; but among themselves they spoke, it is said, in what the English agents call "a most arrogant strain." "I will see to it," said Meer Nusseer, in anticipation of one of the British demands; "we obtained the country by the sword, and if it is to pass from us, it shall not do so without the sword" (page 483);—words not without

their nobleness, which were fulfilled beyond expecattion.

Much vacillation, much falsehood, stained the cause of the chiefs of Sinde; the vacillation of fear, the falsehood of barbarism and of mistrust.

Sir Charles Napier, conscious of always meaning friendship when he spoke of friendship, and war when he denounced war, was by no means disposed to make much allowance for their suspicions; yet it is too possible that the suspicion which he regarded as a mere pretext may often have been genuine. Major Outram thus accounts on one occasion for the conduct of Meer Roostum of Khyrpore, in avoiding an interview with Sir C. Napier:—"That he did not go to your camp under the influence of the lies which had been told him, perhaps says less for his imbecility than for our own credit, *which our proceedings in this and neighbouring countries, since* 1838, *have brought to a very low ebb, I am ashamed to confess*" (page 37.)

Ashamed, indeed! and so should be every Englishman who reads it. Major Outram may or may not have been mistaken in this explanation of the particular case; but one who had lived for years in the country could not be misled as to the general feeling of the people on such a point.

Sir C. Napier had one aim, the carrying out of the new treaty; and he went straight towards it with characteristic vigour and boldness. The Ameers had as many purposes and plans as they had various feelings; their selfishness, their

mutual suspicions, their fears, continually crossing with their common purpose of striking a blow for victory and revenge. We have Sir C. Napier writing to them in such terms as these: "When a man's actions and his words do not accord, I am greatly distressed to know how to act. The government of the Ameers is one of many heads, all speak and act after a different and a strange manner." "The intrigues of these people," he says elsewhere, "are *very silly*, and like a tangled skein of thread." "I am positively sick," says Major Outram, "and doubtless you are tired, of these petty intrigues—brother against brother, and son against father—and sorry that we should be in any way the instruments to be worked upon by such blackguards*."

The Ameers with their false intricacy of plots, and the British General with his words, like Luther's, half battles†, from their straightforward and vivid

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* *Supplementary Correspondence*, p. 7 and 14.

† It is not often that a Blue Book can be recommended as entertaining reading, but the volume of Supplementary Correspondence on Sinde is more interesting than most novels; Sir Charles Napier's letters are as unmistakable as those of a greater leader, less calm, but more picturesque and vivid. Seldom can a series of papers have been presented to Parliament so strongly marked with individual genius. The short letters especially to the insurgent chiefs after the battle, are instinct with a fiery and piercing simplicity. Every letter shows the character of the man, noble and frank, with a strong tinge of haste and despotism. There is one letter only which ought to have borne a less chivalrous signature than that of Napier. It was written in difficult and dangerous circumstances; but nothing can excuse threats like these addressed

energy, occupy the foreground of the confused picture. But in the background, like a cloud on the horizon, is seen the "gathering" of the Beloochee tribes, brave men under brave chieftains, more honest and more determined than their princes, truly regarding the dominion of the English as the dominion of force, and resolute to try whether the English or the Beloochees were the stronger in Sinde.

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by their conqueror to prisoners, who had just ceased to be princes.

"Your intrigues * * * give me a great deal to do. * * * If you give me any more trouble, by stating gross falsehoods, * * * I will cast you into prison, as you deserve. *You are prisoners, and though I will not kill you, as you ordered your people to do to the English, I will put you in irons on board a ship.* * * * Be quiet, or you will suffer the consequences of folly."

No, nothing can excuse it,—not even the extremity of danger. Here is another addressed to one of the bravest and foremost of the Beloochee chiefs, in a very different tone, and altogether noble.

"*Sir C. Napier to the Chief Ahmed Khan Lugharee.*

"Chief, *Hyderabad, May* 11, 1843.

"I honour a brave soldier, but I have not authority to forgive you. You attacked the Residency of a British envoy, Outram. Your princes themselves accuse you. The Governor-general is in wrath at this insult offered to the British Government, and has ordered me to make the Ameer Shahdad and yourself prisoners. I must therefore appeal to the Governor-general, and will plead your cause with him. I hope to gain your pardon; but I will not pledge myself to anything which I may not be able to perform. If you come and reside here, I will receive you till his Lordship's pleasure be known; and if he refuses pardon, I will give you forty-eight hours to depart unmolested."

Had they succeeded who could have blamed them? Who can blame them for the trial?

Let us try to seize and follow the main thread of the "tangled skein" of intrigue, till the knot was cut by the English sword.

The Ameers of Upper and of Lower Sinde alike met the announcement of the new treaty with friendly professions and doubtful conduct. The dispositions of both were similar; but at this period (December, 1842,) it was in Upper Sinde that appearances were most threatening. Meer Roostum Khan of Khyrpore was now eighty-five years old; and the increasing passiveness of age, which had made him our friend in 1839, had made him in 1842 a tool in the hands of our opponents. If he could be said to act in anything from his own will, his subsequent conduct seems to have been a mixture of craft and timidity. His brother, and by the law of Sinde, successor in the rights of headship, Ali Moorad, was an active, contriving, dangerous man, with no great love, perhaps, for the English, but with sense enough to stand steadily on the English side in previous as well as subsequent transactions, at least in such of them as came under the public cognizance of the English authorities.

Previous to Sir C. Napier's arrival in Sinde, Meer Roostum had, it appears, taken some steps indicative of his desire to transfer either during his life or after his death the headship of Upper Sinde to his son, to the exclusion of Ali Moorad. Shortly after Sir C. Napier's arrival, Ali Moorad stated to him Roostum's intention, and asked whether the English would

assist him in it? adding with frank boldness, that whether they did so or not, he would maintain his own rights by arms if necessary. The General replied, that he would unquestionably support the legal claim of Ali Moorad, not against his brother, but against his nephew, as bound by treaty to do. "That," said Ali Moorad, "is all I want: I wish my brother to keep the Turban, and I will obey him, but I will not allow him to give it to any one else." This conversation (recorded at page 114, *Supp. Correspondence*) had probably the effect of fixing Ali Moorad on our side. His tone and conduct on this occasion would seem to bear out the character of him drawn by the swordlike pencil of General Napier. "He is vigorous-minded, ambitious, and I suspect a cunning man, but apparently generous and bold; *in short, as good as barbarians can be, and better than most.*" His after conduct is more doubtful.

On the 18th of December, Roostum, frightened and bewildered by the storm that was rising around him, sent to the British General an offer to come into his camp, and place himself under his personal direction*. General Napier recommended him to

* Meer Roostum afterwards denied having ever sent any such message. It was undoubtedly delivered: the bearer distinctly swears that he received it from the Ameer (*Supplementary Correspondence*, page 118); it does not seem likely that he would dare to invent it; and Meer Roostum immediately acted on the answer. His denial tends rather to show the impossibility of positively depending on any of his statements, even on the allegation that the transfer of the Turban was procured by compulsion. The lax memory of eighty-five years

seek in preference the protection and advice of his brother and heir: he did so, and shortly after General Napier heard that Roostum had resigned to Ali Moorad the Turban of Upper Sinde.

The intention and object of General Napier's advice seems undoubtedly to have been, that Ali Moorad should exercise in his brother's name the power of the Turban, rather than become himself its holder. He wrote to Ali Moorad to this effect, and was told in answer, that the renunciation by Roostum was solemn and complete. It was certainly written in the Koran in a formal manner, and it seemed also to be confirmed by a separate letter

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would account for so much, that it is hardly necessary to urge in addition the probability that they had been eighty-five years of practised inaccuracy.

There is a state of mind which may be persuaded to any thing by the first comer, and persuaded by the second comer that it has been harshly compelled.

It is worth noticing that about the very date of Meer Roostum's betaking himself to Ali Moorad (December 19th) there are in the Digests of Intelligence (page 481) distinct traces of advances made by Meer Roostum, and apparently by his younger relatives also, towards Ali Moorad, even to the extent of a scheme for investing him with the Turban, probably on some terms of advantage to themselves. It is impossible to get at the bottom of these things; but if such a scheme was on foot, quite independent of Roostum's application to the English General, it seems the less likely that anything like compulsion should have been needed to induce him to transfer the Turban when immediately under his brother's influence. On the other hand, it should not be forgotten that Meer Roostum and his relatives, in subsequent conferences with Major Outram, repeatedly professed their ability to prove what they asserted as to the transfer of the Turban having been extorted by compulsion, and eagerly requested a promise of inquiry.

from Roostum to the General (page 503, &c.): both were afterwards asserted by Roostum to have been extorted by compulsion,—a thing not impossible,—easy to suspect, and capable neither of proof nor disproof, from the evidence collected in the Blue Book. It was asserted by Roostum, whose assertion does not prove it to be true: it was denied by Ali Moorad, whose denial does not establish its falsehood. Ali Moorad was certainly an interested party; but Roostum's younger relatives were yet more deeply interested, and the old chief was soon again under their control.

On the 29th of December, Sir C. Napier thus announces to the Governor-general an occurrence which it is evident that he felt to be suspicious as well as critical. "And now, my Lord, I have to tell you, that Meer Roostum has decamped yesterday morning (December 28th). I met Ali Moorad the night before, and desired him to say that I would pay my respects to his Highness the next day; and the next day I heard of his flight."

This may have been from mere timidity; but the old chief afterwards asserted, what Sir Charles Napier himself, for a time at least, suspected, that Ali Moorad had advised him to fly, telling him that the English General intended to imprison him. With whatever motive, he fled; he proceeded to act in concert with the other Khyrpore Ameers, who had taken refuge in the desert, and were collecting troops round their strongholds. Sir C. Napier heard, at the same time, of 15,000 men assembled here, 2000

there—"all," in his own phrase, "changed as if by magic." The assertion went abroad that the Turban had been extorted by compulsion. Great indignation was excited against Ali Moorad, and Meer Roostum continued to claim the allegiance of the Beloochee Chieftains, as the head of the Talpoors in Upper Sinde.

Sir C. Napier upheld Ali Moorad as the sole and rightful possessor of the Turban. If any unworthy means had been made use of to procure the transfer, it is needless to say that Sir C. Napier was neither concerned in nor privy to them. But before anything of the kind was suggested, he had taken his course, and he did not change it. On receiving from Roostum, within a few days of his flight, a statement not given in the Blue Book, but evidently referring to both to the cause of his avoiding the proposed meeting, and to the subject of the turban; he refused, not without some harshness, to reopen the question of the Turban, which he considered absolutely settled, and on which, it appeared to him, "the tranquillity of Upper Sinde depended." His subsequent attempts to effect a meeting with Meer Roostum were, as he truly says, "invariably foiled by the Ameer himself;" whether from real mistrust, caused by the suggestions of Ali Moorad, or, as Sir Charles ultimately thought, from the duplicity of his family, fearing lest he should betray that the resignation of the Turban was voluntary—cannot be ascertained.

It is easy to blame Sir C. Napier: but in the position and character of those with whom he had

to deal, we may find a great deal to palliate, though not to justify, the whole of his conduct. He had, in the first place, to choose between letting the power of the Turban be exercised by Ali Moorad or by Meer Roostum's younger relations; at that time, the question of peace and war might well seem to depend on the choice, and the better right was the heir's. Meer Roostum himself, whatever his intentions might be from moment to moment, was really incapable of dealing with such a critical time: his eldest son, to whom he had been on the very point of transferring the Turban, and in whose hands he had, in fact, put much of its power, was, according to one of the Digests of Intelligence, "burning for war." Had Sir C. Napier encouraged (he did not absolutely decline, but recommended the other course in preference,) Meer Roostum's offer to come into his camp, it seems probable that all the feelings of the Beloochees would have been roused against the English, for holding the old man in their possession as a tool and a slave, and war would instantly have followed. The referring Meer Roostum to Ali Moorad's advice and influence; that is, to the advice and influence of his legitimate heir, of whom Sir C. Napier had at that time no reason to think ill, seems really the only way of meeting this difficulty, not obviously inconsistent with common prudence or with justice. The plan failed, whether through the timidity of Roostum, or the treachery of Ali Moorad, is even now uncertain.

Thus far, then, Sir C. Napier does not appear to

have been wrong; but in refusing afterwards to entertain any question of the transfer of the Turban? It can only be said that the difficulties were immediate and extreme. Before the idea of compulsion having been used was suggested, and even before the flight of the old chief, he had completely and positively committed himself to the support of Ali Moorad.

The state of Sinde in the end of 1842 was certainly not favourable to judicial inquiry. The difficulty, and even the danger, of reopening the question of the transfer of the Turban are obvious. It was easier, and looked safer, to declare it closed. Believing that by establishing Ali Moorad he had secured the tranquillity of Sinde, unwilling to take a step towards undoing his own work, despairing perhaps of discovering the truth, Sir C. Napier seized strong hold of the expedient: "The intrigues of these people," he said, "are nothing to me." But the treaty which bound him to guarantee the rights of Ali Moorad, bound him equally to guarantee those of Meer Roostum, if they could be ascertained; and it is impossible to deny that he took for granted that which, if he had any real doubt about it, he was bound to attempt to ascertain. The whole result is given by himself in one short sentence; "We walk over his folly, and Ali Moorad's intrigues, going our own way." *Going our own way?*—yes.

What the real conduct of Ali Moorad through all these transactions was, it is difficult and even impos-

sible to discover with any certainty. With Major Outram he is really the villain of the drama, both in extent and ubiquity of evil; with Sir C. Napier, he is indifferent honest; and the actual and certain facts, the resignation of the Turban, the flight of Roostum, and all that subsequently followed, do admit of explanation on either hypothesis, or on a mixture of both. Major Outram charges him, not only with making the protection of the British the foundation for unreasonable and provoking encroachments on his relatives; but with the deep villainy of secretly urging them to commit themselves by hostilities, in the hope of securing to himself their forfeited lands; a charge, whether capable of proof or not, not proved in the Blue Book.

By Major Outram's advice, and with the direct view of obviating the evil which might arise from either of these sources, Sir C. Napier assured Ali Moorad more than once, in person and by letter*, that the British would support him in no claims whatever beyond those legally attached to the Turban, and that in case of forfeiture by the others, their territories would *not* be transferred to him. But the high and even despotic tone in which the General asserted the rights of Ali Moorad (proceeding, as it evidently did, from strong desire to have a single, and, as far as interest could make him so, trustworthy person to deal with as head of Upper Sinde,) may well have excited more alarm

* *Sinde Correspondence*, p. 9.

than his statements to Ali Moorad could allay. The consequence of all this was, that the name and wrongs of Meer Roostum became the rallying cry of insurrection; the point on which, if on any point, the question of peace or war ultimately turned.

The interests of the other Ameers of Upper Sinde, especially of the younger branches of Roostum's family, were so deeply affected by the transfer of the Turban to Ali Moorad, that it is easy to suppose how all their influence over the Beloochees and over the old chief's mind would be put in requisition to undo the transaction, whether legitimate or not. The law or practice of Sinde, so far as it could be considered established, attached a fourth part of the land to the Turban, in addition to whatever else might be held in his own right by its possessor*. But at the last transmission of the Turban from his father to Roostum, there had been four chiefs of princely rank in Upper Sinde; now there were, with the sons and grandsons of Meer Roostum's generation, eighteen or nineteen; many of them inimical to Ali Moorad, holding of Roostum portions of the land attached the Turban, and likely to be dispossessed by his resignation. In a letter at p. 18 of the *Supplementary Correspondence*, Major Outram, summing up the extent to which the Khyrpore chiefs are likely to be impoverished between the cession to Bhawulpore and the transaction of the Turban, (an extent which he appears to have increased by a considerable error,

* Will of Meer Sohrab Khan Talpoor. *Suppl. Correspondence*, p. 111.

but which at any rate was great*,) he prefaces a list of eighteen names with the strong expression, "The following is a list of the Ameers and their sons, who are now rendered *desperate*."

This letter is one of those to which in the Blue Book are appended some of Sir C. Napier's notes, and very pointed and to the purpose they are in this and most other cases. He observes that this was done, not by us, but by their own law; that we merely asserted that law, as we were bound by treaty to do; and that even if the Turban had not been transferred to Ali Moorad, the death of Roostum, which must soon occur, would be followed by the same consequences.

Taking for granted, as Sir C. Napier did, that the turban was legally transferred, all this is true. But the hardship to the eighteen chiefs was great; and if we had not been there, it was one of those hardships which would have righted itself—by the strong

* By an error, mainly respecting the value of some property of Ali Moorad, in the district ceded to Bhawulpore, which (as he had not broken the treaty with us,) was to be made good to him. (*Supplementary Correspondence*, p. 134.) It was also said, and believed by Major Outram, that Meer Roostum had been induced by Ali Moorad to cede to him, or that Ali Moorad had occupied without such cession, other lands than those attached to the Turban; any grievance of this nature the British Government was bound to investigate and settle, and doubtless it would have done so had the opportunity ever been given. The *Supplementary Correspondence* touches on this point more than once, in a manner which would seem to indicate it was of some importance; but leaves it after all utterly doubtful whether *any* such lands had been made over or not.—See page 97 *Supplementary Correspondence.*

hand, if in no other way. The law, represented by Ali Moorad, would have come into conflict with existing interests, backed by something of natural equity, and they would have fought it out, or, between blows and words, have scrambled into a kind of compromise. If any trust can be put in their declarations, they wished for nothing better than to settle it among themselves by some such process. But this we could not allow; we were bound to keep the peace, and to mediate between them according to law; and so here our resistless power stepped in, with the sword in one hand and their own law in the other, making its harsh decision hateful. These are the consequences of interference. Forced upon a people who neither trusted us nor loved us, this mediating power had become a firebrand. Between the law of Sinde supported by the English, and the law of nature and passion working in the hearts of brave and barbarous clans, all things were now tending one way.

Yet it is hard to say how far a change on this or any other point would have altered the ultimate result. Before as well as after the transaction of the Turban, the Ameers of Khyrpore had peace on their lips and war gathering round them. They sent civil messages to General Napier, but pertinaciously kept out of his reach; they avoided all treating with him, whether personally or by deputy; they continued to levy at various points the forces which they were required to disband; even a night attack on the British camp was at one time anticipated; and Gene-

ral Napier, reiterating the question, "Is it peace?" and receiving from words and deeds a contradictory and doubtful answer, had to move through the land in the proverbial attitude of soldierly suspicion,—the hand to the sword, the beard on the shoulder. No blow was struck, unless in some plundering and scrambling affrays between Ali Moorad's people and those of the other Ameers; but military movements on the one side, and hostile but undecided gatherings on the other, occupied the end of December and the beginning of January. The object of the Ameers was, to the judgment of the British General, clear enough; to avoid collision till the heat should make war impossible, or until their numerical strength should make the result of battle certain.

Many marches south of Khyrpore, and in the heart of the desert of the Indus, stood the fortress of Emaum Ghur, considered in that country impregnable. The Ameers, it was said, looked to it as a refuge and rallying point for the disaffected, beyond the power of the British to reach. It seemed probable to General Napier that to disabuse them of this idea would insure the present and future tranquillity of Sinde; the recent transfer of power had placed the legal right to the possession of the fortress in the hands of Ali Moorad. With his ready, if not willing consent, and active personal co-operation, General Napier marched into the desert, reached the fortress of Emaum Ghur, found it unoccupied and destroyed it, (January 13—15, 1843*.)

* This statement of the case is given on the authority of

This step has been vehemently blamed. If the fortress had been occupied, General Napier was prepared to attack it, and this would have led at once to war. The ground of blame is, that war was recklessly hazarded, if not unjustly begun; of defence, that the Ameers were undoubtedly levying war; that the fortress was Ali Moorad's; and, finally, that war was likely to be prevented by its destruction. Sir C. Napier, we must recollect, had distinct orders to insist on the dispersion of the troops of the Ameers and their acceptance of the new treaty, even at the cost of war. His intention certainly was to prevent war, the step had in his eyes more than a legal colour; and had it succeeded it would have been called humane as well as politic.

A day towards the end of January was appointed

General Napier. A recent writer in the *Edinburgh Review* argues, not without force, against Ali Moorad's right to the possession of Emaum Ghur; it is a point of some importance in our estimate of Sir C. Napier's proceedings; and it is one which the Blue Book, like many other points, leaves somewhat doubtful. The Reviewer has referred to passages which seem to imply that the fort was the rightful property of another Ameer, neither Roostum nor Ali Moorad; but, on the other hand, there is a letter from Roostum, which ends with these words:—"*And the fort of Emaum Ghur*, for which your Excellency's order was to evacuate, *my son Meer Mahomed made it over to Ali Moorad's people*." The rest of the letter relates to other forts in the desert, which the old chief states have been placed in the actual possession of his son, and will not be given up without his son's order. This would certainly seem to acknowledge that Meer Roostum had, through himself or his son, the control over Emaum Ghur, and had given, or ordered it to be given up to Ali Moorad.

for the Ameers, either in person or by deputy, to meet Major Outram at Khyrpore: the Hyderabad Ameers sent their deputies; the Khyrpore Ameers neither sent nor came themselves; but they moved with their forces southward on Hyderabad, in which direction Sir Charles Napier followed them, having addressed to them an emphatic exhortation and warning to desist from the course they were pursuing. "You imagine that you can procrastinate till your fierce sun drives the British troops out of the field, and forces them to seek shelter in Sukkur. You trusted to your desert, and were deceived; you trust to your deadly sun, and may again be deceived*."

The Ameers of Khyrpore showed an apparent disposition to take the General's advice; not indeed to the extent of dispersing their forces, which were speedily swelled by the addition of the levies of Lower Sinde; but they agreed to meet Major Outram at Hyderabad, to which place the final negotiations were now (February 8th) transferred.

Throughout all these and the subsequent transactions, Major Outram struggled to save the Ameers. He pressed upon Sir Charles Napier to recollect, among many other things, "that whatever rabble soldiery they had assembled, was solely with a view to self defence, in misapprehension of our real objects, *misrepresented as they were to them by Ali Moorad*, and much more that may be urged in excuse for such suspicious people, who have had little

* *Sinde Correspondence*, page 501.

reason, heretofore, to estimate our good faith very highly."

The remark, it may be feared, is too true; the suspicion was too natural, and it is possible that it had its share in drawing together the Beloochee forces. But the Beloochee chiefs and tribes were no mere rabble soldiery, and subsequent events showed how much Major Outram was mistaken in regarding them as drawn together for (in this sense) defensive purposes only.

Conferences followed (from the 8th to the 12th of February), at which the Ameers both of Upper and Lower Sinde were present. They expressed a readiness to accede to the demands of the British for themselves and the Khan of Bhawulpore, but remonstrated bitterly against the transfer of the Turban and the lands attached thereto to Ali Moorad; while professing to spare no exertion to disperse their followers, they repeatedly declared that the Beloochees were beyond their control; and they entreated Major Outram to delay the advance of General Napier on Hyderabad. Feeling how natural their reluctance was, and in the belief that their intentions were as fair as their professions, Major Outram wrote to the British General, who delayed his march for three days (from the 10th to the 13th).

It was with reason that the Ameers spared no protestations to effect this object. Every hour's delay was indeed of the utmost importance to the plans which they had laid; every hour increased their strength; and a few days, perhaps even a day

more, by bringing them over the great festival of Moharrem, which detained many of their people in the villages, would have raised their forces in the field to 50,000 or 60,000 men.

Sir Charles Napier's position had now become one of no ordinary responsibility. At a moment when peace and war were hanging by a thread, he was perplexed by accounts of the most opposite tendency. He received the protestations of the Ameers that they were doing all in their power to disperse the Beloochees: and armed men were brought into his camp bearing their letters to the chieftains, summoning all the strength of the tribes to meet them at Meeanee. "Why do you stop *me?*" said the chief of the party; "there are 600 armed and assembled in the village of ————, within six cos of you; plenty every where." (p. 40.) Major Outram wrote on the 11th, expressing his confidence in the Ameers, his belief that their forces were dispersing or dispersed; and the spies brought intelligence that the whole country was in arms. With 25,000 men, as they truly told him, already collected in his front, 25,000 more marching upon him in all directions, he was in truth in the utmost peril; greater even than he himself believed; for it is clear that General Napier and Major Outram alike underrated the courage of the Beloochees till the day when they met us face to face in the field. The storm clouds which had so long flitted about the horizon were concentrating towards a point, and that point was the British army.

Once satisfied that a most honourable and kind feeling had led to Major Outram's being deceived by the Ameers, General Napier felt that the die was cast; there was no time for negotiation; no time for delay. He knew of the Moharrem festival, and coupling its occurrence with the information he received, conjectured the meaning of the efforts to gain time. He felt on this most critical 14th of February as an English general was bound to feel; "The Ameers and their falsehoods passed from my head: their armies alone occupied my attention." "I neither can nor will halt now," he writes on the previous day to Major Outram, "their object is very plain, and I will not be their dupe. I shall march to Syudabad to-morrow, and next day to Halla, and attack every body of armed men I meet, according to my orders, and which it would be trifling to defer any longer, as no move has been made for four days, and my sick list increasing; it would be to betray the troops to delay another day. * * * *I do hope, my dear friend, that you will see the very perilous ground on which I stand.* * * * "

This advance, it has been asserted, unnecessarily caused the bloodshed of Meeanee; the Correspondence proves that it saved the army. With a whole people in arms closing around a force of less than 3000 men, with evidence under their own hands of the double dealing of the Ameers, was General Napier to wait till the weather and their numbers should enable the Ameers to consummate his destruction? "Was I," he asks, "to place the army

at their mercy, to spare or destroy as they pleased?" No, indeed! He resumed his march on the 14th.

In Major Outram's notes of his "*Conferences with the Ameers of Sinde*, February 8th and 9th, 1843," the following questions and answers are reported:—

Ameers. "Do you know the value of the territory taken from Upper Sinde?"

Commissioner. "About six lacs I understand."

Ameers. "*Does the Governor-general know it?*

Commissioner. "*The General has informed the Governor-general.*"

While the notes of these Conferences on the 8th and 9th were on their way to the hands of Sir C. Napier, three other things were going on. The British General at Sukkurunda was weighing the reports of his spies against the information of Major Outram, and gradually becoming assured of the nearness and greatness of the danger. The Beloochees, readily obedient to the call of their princes and to their own determined resentment, were flocking in thousands to the muster at Meeanee; and an answer to the General's application, for a more lenient arrangement respecting the Roree district, (a concession for which he meant, in his own words, to "make a hard fight," had it been necessary,)—an immediate and favourable answer,—was already on its way!

——Cæsar hath sent——
——*Too slow a messenger.*

It is true that the loss of this territory was not the point ultimately most urged by the Ameers: still

it is evident how much a timely concession on this point would have lightened the other sacrifices; and it might, possibly, in their opinion, have turned the scale of advantage to themselves on the side of peace.

As it was, the Ameers played their dangerous and crafty game to the last. Secretly summoning all the strength they could call into the field, and openly protesting the people were beyond their control, they did all they could to increase the chance of success, and secure themselves, if possible, against the consequences of failure. But they had no intention, and probably not much expectation, of failing. This was their treachery; a treachery perhaps under the circumstances not so deeply criminal as it was heavily punished. Many European princes, with a similar opportunity of trying the chances of war and evading its responsibility, would have done much the same.

On the 12th of February, all the Ameers of Upper and Lower Sinde then present at Hyderabad solemnly accepted the draft of the new treaty. On retiring from this conference, Major Outram passing to the Residency through a dense crowd, was assailed with expressions of open hostility—stones were thrown, and the whole excited multitude joined in a wild and measured cry of invocation to their local saint against the Feringees. The Ameers did their best to protect him; as well they might, for he was to the last, as far as it was possible for an English officer to be so, their steady friend. Feeling, it is evident, most deeply the hardships of

their position, feeling that Sinde had but too much reason to complain of the conduct of England, relying too confidently on their personal regard for himself, he believed their assurances of friendly intentions, he strove to avert their fate, till his efforts nearly terminated in his own destruction. With a view to the restoration of entire confidence, he wrote to request Sir Charles Napier to send the troops to Meerpore, and come in person to Hyderabad; as a step which would at once remove all doubts. "Unquestionably, it would have removed all doubts, and my head from my shoulders," is the General's note on this confiding proposal. The Ameers sent to Major Outram more than once, warning him that their people were beyond their control, and that he had better leave the city; he replied that he would not even place a sentry over his door. No public servant ever fell into an error more complete, or more honourable.

The advance of the British may have led the Ameers to tear off the mask a little sooner; that it made any other difference in their course it is impossible to believe. They had accepted the treaty on the 12th; they afterwards bribed Major Outram's moonshee to steal the counterpart copy in that officer's possession*. On the morning of the 15th of February, they tore to pieces the treaty so obtained before the assembled chiefs in full durbar; and at once led 8000 men with cannon to the

* Sir C. Napier's Observations, page 92, *Supplementary Correspondence.*

attack of the British Residency*. Fortunately, Sir C. Napier had thought that Major Outram's confidence might compromise his own safety, and had sent to Hyderabad a company of soldiers to aid in his protection, if necessary. After a skilful and brave defence the Residency was evacuated with little loss on the part of the English; but the sword was now drawn in earnest. Major Outram joined Sir C. Napier by the way of the river: and the General continued his advance, till on the 17th he came in sight of the Beloochee force strongly posted at Meeanee, within sight of the towers of Hyderabad. Then followed that battle, which taught us to respect the Beloochees of Sinde; in which skill, trained valour, and artillery, hardly prevailed over undisciplined numbers and equal valour. We have won in India some battles of greater importance; we have won many in which the opposed armies were far more numerous; but never was the scale of victory more nearly balanced, more slow to turn. Sir Charles Napier has told the story of the best fought of Asiatic battles in a despatch which does justice to the merits (at least the warlike merits) of all concerned, friends or enemies, except himself. "My conscience," he says, "acquits me of the blood which has been shed. The tyrannical and deceitful Ameers brought on the battle, the fierce tribes of Beloochee robbers *were resolved that it should be so, and bravely did they execute their resolution.*"

* One, or two, of the Ameers were present; one, it appears, remonstrated against the attack. *Suppl. Corr.* pp. 137, 141.

The hostile Ameers both of Hyderabad and Khyrpore surrendered at once, and the British occupied Hyderabad without resistance. But the spirit of the Beloochees was not yet broken. In little more than a month, on March 24th, they met Sir Charles Napier in another great battle (known as that of Dubba or Hyderabad), under the command of Meer Shere Mahomed of Meerpore. As that chieftain's interest had in no way been affected by the new treaty, his opposition to us, which, seen from the English side, was unreasonable and unaccountable, in another point of view throws some light on the real causes of the war, and has in truth very much the look of proceeding from that unreasoning feeling, which failure makes disaffection, and success patriotism. Though the English force was nearly twice as strong as at Meeanee, on this occasion, and the Beloochees fewer, they resisted manfully, and retired from a battle-field heaped with the corpses of the *elite* of the tribes, all, it was afterwards observed, men in or past the prime of life, without a youth among them. They had now tried their full strength and had failed; they had fulfilled their resolve. The country they had won by the sword had past from them by the sword, and they do not appear to have gathered in force again.

Thus was completed the victory which, with the exception of the possessions of Ali Moorad, "placed at the disposal of the British Government the country on both banks of the Indus, from Sukkur to the sea."

The Ameers, with the exception of that chief, were deposed, and their country annexed to British India. Thus was the work begun in 1838, completed in 1843. This was the end,—an end which, if we look back to the beginning, shocks every feeling of justice. Yet, at the point which things had at last reached, it is hard to suggest a better solution of the question, "What was now to be done with Sinde?"

The Ameers had not only shown themselves, as they well might, our bitter enemies, but they had in the proceedings immediately previous to the battle, given their cause a character of falsehood; and they had all but succeeded in a well-laid scheme for the destruction of our army. They had played a deep game, and it had been decided against them,—a game of that kind which can never be played *twice**.

* It is worthy of notice that Major Outram himself did not, even at the time, entirely believe in the perfect sincerity of their professions of desire to disperse their troops. He says, (February 14,) "I believe" that they "merely hoped to get Roostum's party benefitted by making an appearance of ferment amongst their Beloochees," (p. 43,)—a belief somewhat inconsistent with his other belief, that they did in fact try to disperse them, as well as with their own statement that they could not restrain them, and with the opinion that they were at last only hurried along with the irresistible feeling of the people. They certainly urged the question of justice to Roostum with a reiterated earnestness which, as reported by Major Outram, it is difficult to believe fictitious. Whether any concessions on the point would have altered their course it is impossible to say. Their treachery, such as it was, consisted in the friendly professions by which they strove to evade the responsibility of their hostile acts. While negotiations were pending, they kept drawing together all the forces

With the exception of Ali Moorad, whose interest had kept him on our side in opposition to his countrymen and relations, all were implicated in the hostilities to which their previous conduct had given a character of deceit. Meer Sobdar, who had been considered our friend up to the battle of Meeanee, and whom, as such, the Revised Treaty not only compensated for his share of Kurachee, but rewarded with additional territory, had in these last transactions played zealously the part of *Facing both ways*,—a part sometimes dangerous as well as contemptible.

A few days before the battle he sent to Sir C. Napier, proposing in case of hostilities to march out into the field with the other Ameers; the English were not to attack him, and he would be ready to fall on the Beloochees at a given signal. General Napier saw through the complex treachery of the villainous proposal, and returned an answer at once honest and acute. "Tell your master that my army has no fear of the Beloochees, and does not need the aid of traitors. I consider his Highness as our good ally, and as a friend advise him to keep his soldiers in Hyderabad; for if I should meet his 5,000 men in the field, I shall assuredly fall upon them." Meer

they could collect, and at last let them loose upon the English, protesting that they could not control them. Of thus much it seems impossible to acquit them. Some light, perhaps, is thrown on the truth by the fact, that on the occasion of the passage of the army of the Indus in 1839, they made similar professions of their inability to restrain their people; but the complete tranquillity that thence at once followed their acceptance of the treaty showed that it was not the *power* that was wanting.

Sobdar, thus forced to choose, chose the side which he thought at this point the strongest. He kept, indeed, in Hyderabad—himself; but for his soldiers —"his Highness sent 4,800 men into the field of Meeanee, *where they fought us manfully**." His Highness moreover, it afterwards appeared, desired one of his chief followers to join in the attack on the Residency. Being asked to come forward himself, he "laughed and said, *that would never do*†."

To confide in Meer Sobdar after this, "that," in his own words, "would never do." And, as regards the other Ameers,—with a judgment formed upon the evidence afforded in the Blue Book, of their hatred of British interference, of their spirit of intrigue, and one can hardly avoid saying of treachery, of their faithlessness, and of their internal misgovernment, it is impossible not to be deeply impressed with the belief that it would not have been wise or ultimately beneficial, to restore to such men power, of which the exercise must henceforth have been constantly checked and watched; it is too clear what the consequences of such a course would have been. Mere puppets in the hands of some English resident, capable of doing a certain degree of harm but no good,—effective chiefly as a means of reminding the Beloochee chiefs of their lost independence and provoking them to another struggle: such would have been the position of these unfortunate men if we had still maintained them as rulers. We should have been tyrants to them, without being able to benefit the people.

* *Supplementary Correspondence*, page 92. † Ibid., p. 141.

That their dynasty was comparatively recent, and their government tyrannical, were considerations which, though in no degree justifying what had gone before, could not but have some weight in the crisis at which things had arrived. Sinde was, and in justice ought to have continued, nothing to us, but we had made it something. We had taken the charge of its destinies upon ourselves; we had in 1839 associated it, as an "integral part," with the empire of Hindostan; and the main question seems to be, whether in February, 1843, we had, or had not, in one way or other, made it impossible for its former rulers to govern it in connexion with us. If we had, what course remained? None perhaps, for the present at least, so good as that which Lord Ellenborough has taken.

It is an every-day remark, that the first step in wrong is often all. The man who has freely taken it finds himself no longer free. A second step must be taken, and then a third, each enforced by an increasing penalty. Nearly such is the progress of nations in a course of injustice; but with this difference, that to retract a criminal step is far more possible for an individual than for a statesman. At every stage of international transactions new interests spring up, new duties are contracted; and even if the right and wrong do not actually change sides, the result often is, that the nation cannot right its original wrong without wronging others whom it is bound to protect. This is a part, and an appropriate part, of the penalty for national wrongs. Deeply as the

Ameers have been injured, it may be feared that the evil can be no more undone now than if they had been slain with braver men on the field of Meeanee.

The history is after all, a simple and not a new one. An unjust war brought us into unnecessary collision with the rulers of Sinde; the collision itself was a violation of treaties, accompanied by unnecessary aggravations: they resisted, and to get rid of the embarrassment of their resistance, we fixed on their necks the yoke of our dominion; they showed a disposition to shake it off, and to secure it we tightened it severely; they strove to break it with a great and treacherous effort, and now at last in self-defence we beat them down. The responsibility of all this is shared among different individuals; we may divide it among them in different proportions; we may vindicate one or another, wholly or in part; but we cannot vindicate England.

That Sinde will be better governed than heretofore, and many of its people happier, need not be doubted. This duty the British Government have taken on themselves, and it may be hoped that they will strive to fulfil it. But before we had contracted any duties towards the people of Sinde, we had contracted duties towards its rulers. How we have discharged them let the preceding pages tell. There have been offences on both sides; but every offence of ours has been a gain to us, and every offence of theirs has been heavily visited on them. They may have deserved all that has happened to them; but the balance of punishment between us and them has

not *yet* been held by an even hand. From the place of their exile* they have emitted grievous complaints against the British Government, full, it is true, of misstatements and inventions, but bearing throughout the impress of one genuine feeling, a most bitter sense of wrong. And such it must all seem to them. "You charge us," they might say, "with treacherous enmity; but we knew from the beginning that you would take our country from us, and you have taken it." *Their* narrow view of the events which have reduced them from princes to prisoners, if it could be fairly expressed either by themselves or others, would not be the true one; yet we might learn something besides compassion from it. But we need not look at the affair from their side; it is enough to look at it from our own.

We have seen the jealousy with which the chiefs of Sinde regarded our first admission into their country. There are engines which, if a man but brush them with the edge of his sleeve, seize him with a deadly hold, that passing unslackened from sleeve to wrist, from wrist to arm, from arm to trunk, drags him gradually and entirely into the iron mill which grinds him to nothing. Is our Indian empire to be such an engine to its neighbours?

Is it well that the yet independent princes of India should stand before us in an attitude mingling hate, distrust, and terror; that a single English traveller should be dreaded as the forerunner of an invading army; that all should feel, as the Beloochee

* *Supplementary Correspondence*, p. 57, &c.

chieftain felt, that the land which an Englishman has seen is the land of its rightful possessors no longer? In the knowledge that such apprehensions follow our steps, in the experience that has justified the apprehensions, is there nothing humiliating, nothing except—Glory?

Surely, surely, we were not set up in India for this only; to teach its hundred nations once again the one lesson which it seems the world in six thousand years has perfectly learnt, that strength is strong. That much they might have learnt formerly from the Mogul and the Mahratta. That strength can be false and unjust,—this too is a lesson which they ought to have learnt from them only. Is it no part of our duty to teach them,—and to teach them, not merely by just government in our own dominions, but through those great transactions of States, which are acted, like scenes, in the view of all mankind; which, carrying to all, as they do, on their surface, a broad and comprehensible meaning, are, and will be to mankind in general the chief indications of national character—that strength can be conscientious, just, and true?

But, some say, the Indian States must all sooner or later fall under our dominion; and a little sooner, a little later, what matters it? They will give us cause for quarrel, and the subjugation will follow of necessity; in aggression, even were it aggression, we do but anticipate a little the natural course of events. It must and will be so. What difference does it make after all, whether the steps which led to a

conquest were all quite right, or were a little hurried by the passions of man; nay, even a little unjust;—since the conquest itself must have come at last?

That is to say,—We are the paramount power of India, and while we remain so, those who attack us will fall before us; those who will not keep at peace with us will lose the power of making war. What difference then does it make whether we respect their rights or disregard them; whether we attack them with or without cause?

What difference? To ourselves the difference of infinity, the difference between right and wrong. To the surrounding nations, the difference between looking on our power with confidence in our justice and moderation, or with jealous and merited suspicion. Even to those who may fall under our power there is a great and corresponding difference between an unwilling submission to conquest provoked by themselves, and the bitter hatred of wrong. It is much, but not enough that our sway should be felt by a large majority of the inhabitants of India as a blessing; it is a great drawback upon this, a great check to the good which might be otherwise effected, if the establishment of our power is to be associated in the minds of many, and those not the meanest nor the worst of our subjects, with recollections, not of defeat only, but of falsehood, injustice, hypocrisy.

It is not true that they are incapable of feeling the difference. None are blind to the nobleness of the combination of the might which *could* violate

rights with the justice which respects them; none to the hardship of the injustice which openly identifies might with right; above all, none are blind to the baseness of the hypocrisy which, while weighing down the balance with a heavy sword, still protests that it is even. Or if there are any nations in the world thus incapable of distinguishing right and wrong, worth and baseness in the conduct of others, these very Sinde Papers would be enough to show that such are not even the rudest among the Mahometan nations of India. "We know you are powerful; you say you are moderate and just; now is the time to prove it;" this not unfrequently is their tone. They appeal to justice, to generosity; they try the actions of others by a higher standard than they observe themselves. Our actions ought to be above their rule; when we show a grasping and covetous spirit, when we attack the unoffending, when we violate our pledged word, they are far below it. Crimes of this character have before now shaken our growing empire to its basis; it has little now to fear from external assault; but they may yet make it not worth the holding.

In the most practical point of view the importance of India to England is rising every day; it is brought nearer to us every day; the last ten years reducing its distance from months to weeks have done much to connect the tone, the thoughts, the very statemanship of India, with England. The next ten may do much more, and if India is to be a school of political immorality—a field thrown open

to "uncontrollable principles," the lessons learnt there may yet be practised at home. India is not now a money speculation; it is not even, though this is much more, a mere outlet to the enterprise and courage of many for whom there is no worthy place in our crowded island; it is a great trust committed to our hands for purposes to which the dreams of a conqueror are commonplace and ignoble.

What is our Indian empire? Look in the *East India Register*, and you will not find it there. You will find lists of mostly undistinguished names, belonging to certain Merchants, Factors, Writers, otherwise and more truly designated as Collectors, Magistrates or Residents; the dry bones of a living miracle. These few hundred Englishmen, taken almost at random from the educated classes, supported by a small force of English soldiers ten times outnumbered by their native army, govern, judge, or influence one hundred and forty millions. By right and by wrong, by the brain and by the hand, by strength of intellect and of will; by the calmness of steadfast purpose, by the very rashness of courage, by that confidence of success which fulfils itself, by the sense and proof of superiority, they have won and hold this unexampled dominion. To the praise of wisdom and valour they have shown themselves anxious to add that of just and benevolent rule towards those under their sway. It is the most wonderful chapter in the history of mankind: it might be the noblest: if we are true to ourselves and to the principles we profess, it yet will

be. With every drawback that can be named, with all their faults, national and individual, the English yet represent to the people of India a something above themselves, and better than themselves; something which they must respect, and might be gradually led to imitate, but not if we place obstacles in the way; not if we teach them to make the significant distinction, "*We know* that you are powerful; *you say* that you are just."

The real mission of England in India is not to crush, but to raise. For this, not only should our strength be feared, as it is, and will be—but our justice undoubted, our generosity acknowledged—above all, our word fixed as the oracle of God. Every broken word, every gratuitous war, every unjust acquisition, not only stains the present indelibly, but retards or destroys some part of the promise of the future. The many who are indifferent whether these things are done or not, are so far indifferent to their duties as English citizens; the few, who having a direct power to check them are equally indifferent, are so far unfit to guide the destinies of England; and those by whom they are deliberately done are false to the best hopes of mankind, and ten times false to the highest glory of their country.

NOTE ON A RECENT ARTICLE IN THE "EDINBURGH REVIEW."

WHILE the foregoing pages are passing through the press, an article on the conquest of Sinde has appeared in the *Edinburgh Review;* an article censuring the conduct throughout both of the Governor-general and of Sir Charles Napier with a severity which would have been more impressive had it been less obviously partial. An elaborate statement proceeding from such a quarter, and written with much vigour as well as bitterness, is likely to produce a considerable effect upon all who read it; it is therefore only right to mention that the article in question contains not a few serious misrepresentations, and to support the assertion by noticing some of them.

Among the points urged most strongly by the Reviewer are the following:—

That Lord Ellenborough had no real grounds for demanding a revisal of the treaties.

That Lord Ellenborough, by the revised treaties, punished the more and the less guilty alike.

That Lord Ellenborough punished one Ameer over whom he had no pretence of control whatever.

That this Ameer was punished for an utterly frivolous offence.

That the final accusation of treachery against the Ameers in the proceedings previous to the battle of Meeanee, is utterly and obviously groundless.

And that Sir C. Napier, in addition to other indefensible proceedings, *disavowed* an important act which he undoubtedly committed.

On some of these heads it is my intention, not so much to argue against the Reviewer's view, as to contrast the statements by which he supports it with the materials on which they are professedly founded, and to show the very serious variances which occasionally exist between the two.

At page 507, and elsewhere, the Reviewer treating as futile the idea that there was really any ground for apprehending hostility from the Ameers, speaks of the anticipated danger, especially after our successes in Affghanistan, not only as a mere and absolute mare's nest, but a posthumous mare's nest, discovered after the event to justify the Indian Government's proceedings, and refers to the general opinion of "those best qualified to judge," that the offences in question were not really dangerous. The degree of danger, of course it is open to any one to dispute by fair reasons; but not by such means as are made use of in the following statement. "The most that the Indian Authorities ever attributed to the Ameers was 'acts of intended hostility;' by which ambiguous phrase was meant, not a conspiracy, such as the House of Commons was taught to believe in, but the expression on paper, in two instances, of feelings hostile to us, and the levying of tolls on the River Indus." (*Edinburgh Review*, p. 507.)

What kind of conspiracy the House of Commons was taught to believe in no one can say; it is sometimes taught to believe in strange inventions: but as to the Reviewer's description of "the most that the Indian Authorities ever *attributed* to the Ameers," it is a description which the House of Commons, should it ever read the Sinde Papers, will hardly be brought to believe.

At page 352 of the *Sinde Correspondence* is a Minute containing these words:—"The intelligence which has reached us from various quarters, within the last few days, from Upper and Lower Sinde, renders it in my opinion highly desirable that we should, if possible, strengthen the force now stationed at Kurachee, in order to enable the General Officer commanding in Sinde to call, when the

necessity arises, for reinforcements to the troops now stationed at Sukkur and other places in Upper Sinde. There can be no doubt that most of the Ameers in Upper and Lower Sinde have, for some time past, been engaged in intrigues against us; in fact, that they only want the power, not the will, to make an attempt, in imitation of the tribes of Affghanistan, to expel us from their country." The Minute goes on to quote extracts from the digests of the Sinde Agencies, which, it is added, "place beyond doubt the hostile spirit and excitement which prevail, and at the same time indicate the cause, which will, if precautions are not adopted, probably cause it to break out into active operation." The cause directly alluded to, is "the intelligence of the British having evacuated Candahar, or, as it is here rumoured, having been expelled from it." The Minute continues:—"The above relates to Upper Sinde. In Lower Sinde, if possible, a more hostile spirit exists. * * * These indications ought not to be neglected: measures should be adopted either to prevent the Ameers from proceeding to extremities, or to punish them, should such be deemed necessary, for what they have already done."

The person who writes this Minute, concurred in by another official, may or may not be qualified to judge, but he is at least an Indian Authority, for he is Sir George Arthur, Governor of Bombay.

On the same subject, and in the same spirit, the Reviewer, at page 483, says, "that the Governor-general, about the end of August, reverted once more to the possibility of turning to account the story, *now some months old*, of the Ameers' intrigues."

That is, the Governor-general, about the end of August, was reviving a "story" quite gone by; some months old. The story of the Ameers' intrigues in February or April, was undoubtedly some months old by the end of August; but the story of the Ameers' intrigues, speaking generally, was by the end of August, not quite

so obsolete. The date of the above Minute by Sir George Arthur is *September 2nd*, and the Sinde intelligence to which it particularly refers, is that of August 9th and 10th. Now as Simla appears to be only about seven or eight days' distance from Sukkur, it may seem not improbable to any one except the Reviewer that the Governor-general when, on August 26th, he penned the letter which "reverts to the possibility of turning to account the story of the Ameers' intrigues," was in possession of the same materials upon which the Governor of Bombay formed the judgment expressed above.

That Lord Ellenborough was mistaken; that the Governor of Bombay was mistaken; that the danger really never existed;—this is open to any one to contend: but that "the most that the Indian Authorities ever *attributed* to the Ameers was 'acts of intended hostility,'" with the explanation of that phrase given by the Reviewer,—this is a statement which, in the face of the above Minute, it required some, but not admirable, boldness to make.

In connection with the question of the actual commission of the alleged offences, the Reviewer (page 485) makes by implication a very serious charge against Lord Ellenborough and General Napier. He attributes to the Governor-general the wickedness of urging and hurrying the General, by expressions of his own wishes, to an inconsiderate decision on the point referred to his judgment—the authenticity of the two "treasonable" letters attributed to Meer Roostum Khan and Meer Nusseer Khan; and he attributes to Sir Charles Napier the baseness of allowing the wishes of the Governor-general to influence his decision on a question which he was bound to decide according to his conscience and conviction.

The revised treaties were sent to Sir Charles Napier, with the intimation that their enforcement was to depend upon his decision respecting the authenticity of the letters. This is the Reviewer's account of what followed:—

"A little hesitation on the part of the General—who

now looked a serious responsibility in the face, and was anxious to verify afresh the doubtful points of fact—called forth, on the 24th of November, a second and less equivocal expression of the Governor-general's wishes. 'Your force being now collected, I am disposed to think that no delay should take place in communicating to the Ameers the ultimate decision of the British Government with respect to the revision of our engagements with them, which their conduct has compelled us to demand.' Sir Charles Napier could hesitate no longer. He instantly resolved to act. He '*saw his way clearly.*' He no longer had the least doubt that Nusseer Mahomed Khan of Hyderabad, and Roostum Khan of Khyrpore, were guilty of having written, with '*hostile designs,*' all the letters imputed to them . . . ." (*Edinburgh Review*, p. 485.)

That is, on the receipt of the letter of the 24th of November containing the "less equivocal expression of the Governor-General's wishes," Sir C. Napier, who had before hesitated, hesitated no longer; having before doubted, no longer had the least doubt. He "saw his way clearly," that is, to the conclusion which was not clear to him before; this is what the Reviewer wishes us to believe. Let us see what are the facts of which he thus expresses the result. At page 453 of the *Sinde Correspondence* is a letter from Sir Charles Napier dated the 17th of November, containing his view of the state of the question respecting these letters: a question which was referred to him by letters which reached him on the 12th, and which he is, on the 17th, answering. He states that he has been trying, as yet unsuccessfully, to procure and submit for Lord Ellenborough's opinion a secret seal of Meer Nusseer Khan's, to be compared with that of the intercepted letter; he adds some circumstances which go to prove its authenticity; and concludes his remarks with these words:—"In short, no one here has any doubt of the authenticity of the letter. But I shall nevertheless endeavour to get a proof seal."

He next states that the other letter was *undoubtedly* written by Meer Roostum's confidential minister, the only question being whether Meer Roostum was privy to it, and that another hostile act attributed to the same minister is equally certain. Lord Ellenborough's letter of the 24th of November is in answer to this of the 17th, and takes up the question on the ground furnished by it,—that is to say, on the belief of Sir Charles Napier, nearly positive already, waiting only for one confirmatory circumstance. "You are much more competent to decide on the spot, as to the authenticity of the letters attributed to Meer Nusseer Khan and Meer Roostum Khan, than I am here, and I am prepared to abide by, and to support, your decision. . . ." And shortly afterwards follows "the less equivocal expression of the Governor-general's wishes," quoted by the Reviewer; and dependent, like the other expressions of the Governor-general's views, previous as well as subsequent, upon Sir C. Napier's ultimate decision.

But at any rate the slight doubt on Sir C. Napier's mind was removed by the Governor-general's letter of the 24th? *No.* On the 18th, the next day after his former letter, Sir C. Napier had written to the Governor-general; "I have procured, not only a similar seal to that of Meer Nusseer Khan's, but on the cover of the letter to which it is attached is writing known to be that of Chotram, the Ameer's confidential moonshee. I inclose both this and the treasonable letter. *There now remains no question of the fact.*" Nor did Sir Charles Napier act till he received an answer to this letter of the 18th.

To make the misrepresentation entirely complete in the less as well in the more important part of the Reviewer's statement,—the words, "He 'saw his way clearly,'" which as used by him mean one thing, as used by Sir C. Napier mean another. The Reviewer means to imply, "He saw his way clearly," a way not clear before, to the conclusion respecting the letters: Sir Charles Napier's words are, "I had no intention of waiting for Major

Outram's arrival, because till we get into the details of the treaty I do not want assistance; as your Lordship has been so good as not to give me a colleague, I mean to consult no one: *I see my way clearly*," that is, "I see the course of action which it is expedient to follow with reference to the acceptance of the revised treaty," the question of the *letters* being a separate and, as far as Sir C. Napier was concerned, a settled one.

The Reviewer must reconcile his colouring of the facts with these dates and letters, as he best can. Few persons have a keener eye for discrepancies: he has pointed out several in the Blue Book; here is one between his own statement and the facts on which it should have been based, which, if he can reconcile, he need not despair of doing the same for Sir Charles Napier and Lord Ellenborough.

Having prepared his readers with this view of the manner in which the Indian Government and its representative in Sinde came to the conclusion that the alleged offences had been committed, the Reviewer proceeds to comment on the nature of the offences and the punishment by which they were visited. The offence upon which the penalty inflicted on Meer Nusseer Khan of Hyderabad was mainly justified, was the writing of a particular treasonable letter to a hill chief, Beebruck Boogtie. The Reviewer, speaking of this letter, together with that addressed by Meer Roostum's minister to Shere Singh, sometimes uses expressions in truth applicable only to the latter, which have the air of being a description of both, as in the following words: "Is it then just—is it becoming—that a Government, in the very act of denouncing the foundation of a treaty as a fiction, should come forward and declare a resultless infraction of the least important part of it unpardonable?—a timid protest against its continuance, whispered in the ear of a foreign sovereign, inexcusable?"

Though the effect of these words is to give a general notion of *both* the letters, and as far as Meer Nusseer Khan's

at least is concerned, an incorrect one, the "timid protest" is probably meant to designate the letter to Shere Singh. Certainly Meer Nusseer's letter to the hill chief is of a very different character. To it therefore the other half of the description is meant to apply. It must be the "resultless infraction of the least important part of the treaty." Resultless!—yes, perhaps ultimately resultless, except to the unhappy chief himself; but, as to its being an "infraction of the *least important* part of a treaty," of which the main object was in Lord Auckland's words, to establish our entire political and military ascendancy in Sinde—let the reader judge, comparing it at the same time with the separate and distinct descriptions of it elsewhere given by the Reviewer.

Meer Nusseer Khan of Hyderabad to Beebruck Boogtie.

"To the Asylum of exaltation and happiness.

"Prior to this a perwannah was sent to you, and you have no doubt acted up to the orders therein conveyed, since you are an old and trusty servant of this Sirkar; for this reason you ought to consider yourself worthy of the favour of the Sirkar, whose kindness is likely to be daily increased towards you; it behoves you, therefore, to exhibit your gallantry and bravery, for you are aware of the treaty between this Sirkar and *some people*, which was only entered into to *gain time, and to put off matters* for *the moment, and the day appears now to have arrived;* and I also wrote to you before on this matter; and it is now evident

"The call directed to Beebruck Boogtie did not point to any *definite overt act*, nor indeed *at action of any sort;* but merely at a *passive* state of vigilance and preparedness." (p. 495.)

Elsewhere described as an "aimless departure from his pledge" not to hold intercourse with foreign powers.

"Though *vague* in its terms, expressive of undisguised hostility to the British."

that *some people have been worsted by the Ghazees of Khorassan, and are without hope,* and are retreating towards Sinde; and although by the grace of God and the assistance of the Prophet (upon whom be peace!) *every arrangement that is possible will be made by this Sirkar, to expel them from this country,* still you being an especial servant, ought to be of good cheer, and to exhibit a degree of courage more than on former occasion, and *be ready with your foot in the stirrup,* and in expectation of my orders; and also to signify to your brother Beloochees and other mountain tribes, to depend upon the favour of the Sirkar, and to hold themselves in readiness to act with you, and act according to the orders you will receive from me, and to show courage equal to that of 'Doda Murree,' that your prowess may become known."

Dodah Murree, it will be recollected, was the brave old Murree chief of Kahun who *had* driven the English out of his country. Could language be more hostile, more pointed? could language be less accurately described, as "aimless," as not pointing to "to action of any sort"? There is a noble and barbarous strength in it which stirs the blood; it is the letter of a determined though not open enemy. It is of this letter that Lord Ellenborough says, "If there be no doubt that Meer Nusseer Khan addressed the letter attributed to him to Beebruck Boogtie, that letter

alone is a sufficient ground for exacting from Meer Nusseer Khan any penalty which it is allowable to impose on an enemy." To this opinion we need not altogether subscribe. There is a difference in almost all cases, between the plan, and the act: but no one would have disputed the conclusion that the letter alone, if authentic, was a sufficient ground for feeling assured that nothing but fear could restrain Nusseer Khan from hostilities, and for taking whatever step of punishment or precaution might seem necessary to restrain him.

Another point urged strongly by the Reviewer is, the unjust distribution of the penalties among the Ameers. He examines the terms of the revised treaty respecting Lower Sinde, and states that "The result of the new arrangement is, that Meers Nusseer Mahomed Khan, Meer Mahomed Khan, Shahdad Khan, and Hosein Ali Khan, all of Hyderabad, suffer precisely alike. The only remaining Ameer of Lower Sinde, Sobdar Khan, suffers somewhat, but less than his brethren." He proceeds to point out the great disparity between the offences attributed to Meer Nusseer, and those of the other Ameers, to denounce vehemently the injustice of punishing them all equally; a denunciation that would be just, if it had not been altogether founded in error. Again, (at p. 500) taking up the cause of Meer Mahomed Khan of Hyderabad, he says, "Now, the Governor-general says, in his final summing up, 'In his case (Nusseer Mahomed Khan's) the right to make any demand, extending to the cession of territory,' depends upon his being the author of the treasonable correspondence. How it happens, then, that the Ameer Meer Mahomed Khan, who is charged with no treasonable correspondence, and with only a third part of the remainder of Nusseer Mahomed's delinquency, is condemned to 'the cession of territory,' to every other punishment inflicted on his more guilty brother, is, to our humble faculties a puzzle, which we wish that Lord Ellenborough's defenders would have the goodness to explain."

The defenders of Lord Ellenborough have at least in this an easy task. The intention of the revised treaty is not that attributed to it by the Reviewer. Though Article XI. (which provides for the apportionment of the cessions among the Ameers, according to the tribute previously payable,) would if it stood alone bear the interpretation, it is perfectly clear from the expressions of the Governor-general, both elsewhere and in the very letter which transmits the draft of the treaties to Sir C. Napier, and from the circumstance of his addressing a separate note to Meer Nusseer Khan to be delivered together with a draft of the treaty, that the cessions of land to be so proportioned are those to the British in exchange for, and commensurate with the tribute previously payable; and that the cession of Subzulkote to the Khan of Bhawulpore is meant for a *penalty* to fall upon Meer Nusseer Khan alone, of the Lower Sinde Ameers. The others were to lose *nothing* in revenue; he was to lose the revenue of his share of Subzulkote as a penalty for his more active "treason." This is the "*cession*" which is to be justified on proof of the hostile letter. The terms of the draft of the treaty are what they ought not to have been—inaccurate; but the accompanying circumstances make it clear that their object was in the case of Meer Sobdar, a gain as well as an exchange; in that of three out of the five Lower Sinde Ameers, a mere exchange; in Meer Nusseer Khan's case alone, a penalty as well as an exchange. The Reviewer's interpretation implies that the Governor-general was acting in opposition not only to the views of the political agents in Sinde, but to his own frequently declared intentions. How Major Outram, the commissioner for the details of the treaty, understood it, is quite clear from his letter of January 18*, in which he balances Nusseer Khan's share of Shikarpore, valued at one lac, against his tribute, one lac, for which it would be therefore an exact exchange;

* No. 27, p. 12, *Supplementary Correspondence.*

and then, suggesting that he may as well be mulcted without compensation of his share of Kurachee, adds, "The fourth share of Kurachee being 25,000 rupees, is all Nusseer Khan would suffer *in addition to his share of Subzulkote*," his share of Subzulkote being (as appears at p. 445) two-thirds of the whole of that district; the rest belonging to a son of Meer Roostum.

There were three Ameers, whom it was the intention of the revised treaty to punish in this manner. These were as above, in Lower Sinde, Meer Nusseer of Hyderabad; in Upper Sinde, Meer Roostum and Meer Nusseer of Khyrpore. A point strongly urged by the Reviewer, is the monstrous injustice of inflicting any penalty on the last-mentioned chief, for his share in the intrigues: and that for two reasons; first, because he was perfectly independent; next, because he was all but perfectly innocent.

Nothing need here be added to what has been said in the text, respecting the severity of the penalty inflicted on Upper Sinde; the undisguised facts, however, do not content the Reviewer.

There was something of a set-off to the punishment inflicted on Meer Nusseer of Khyrpore, to which the Reviewer thus refers: "It is also due to the Governor-general to state, that, as a set-off to the forfeiture of half this chief's territories, claimed by his Lordship in satisfaction of the injury to 'British interests' above described, he actually had the generosity to exempt his victim from 'every claim heretofore made in the name of the late Shah Soojah.' Shah Soojah, whose connexion with us the Governor-general had himself reprobated not many days previously, in stronger terms than are usually found in a public proclamation; Shah Soojah, whose monarchy had been for a year past extinct, and who was himself dead and gone!"

The claim on Meer Nusseer's father, as well as on the Lower Sinde Ameers, on behalf of Shah Soojah, was

always monstrously unjust; but demanded as it was from the beginning by us, and indirectly for our own purposes, and perpetually claimed as due from 1839 to 1842, (and even, it would appear from a return made by Sir C. Napier, at page 367, having been specially advanced to the Shah on behalf of the Ameers of Upper Sinde, that is, of Meer Mobaruck,) it was due as much in 1842 as in 1839; but the Governor-general was quite right in relinquishing the claim. The candid Reviewer, however, omits the fact, that the revised treaty also goes on in the same sentence to exempt Meer Nusseer Khan from the "annual tribute, and the arrears thereof, on his own behalf," which had been also imposed on his father, as the one hostile Ameer of Upper Sinde, as a distinct penalty for his conduct in 1839, the claim for which had been perpetually kept up, though never embodied in a definite treaty; and whether originally right or wrong, could in no way be weakened by the downfall or death of Shah Soojah.

The Reviewer, however, maintains that Meer Nusseer Khan of Khyrpore was in 1842 practically and perfectly independent, and the circumstances from which he deduces this conclusion, as stated by himself, are these:—"Meer Nusseer Khan . . . stands exactly in his father's position; Meer Mobaruck (his father) being considered inimical to the views of the British, was, during the original discussions of 1838, refused the favourable terms (favourable as compared with those exacted at Hyderabad,) which were extended to the other three members of the Khyrpore family; and he was required, as the condition of a British guarantee, to contribute seven lacs of rupees as a donation to Shah Soojah, and one lac annually as a fixed tribute to ourselves. To this he naturally demurred." Owing to various circumstances, "the issue was put off from year to year, till at the close of 1841, Meer Nusseer Khan, the heir of Mobaruck, found himself in precisely the same position as that in

which Sir Alexander Burnes found* his father four years before. The Indian Government still continued unable to do more than threaten him with an attack from Shah Soojah, unless he bought a guarantee from them on their own terms; and the waning power of the Shah was rendering such a threat every day less formidable, till ultimately the King's death, and the extinction of his monarchy, left Meer Nusseer Khan, at the moment of Sir Charles Napier's arrival, in perfect independence,—in no no danger from any foreign power,—unshackled by a single engagement to the British," &c. (*Review*, page 490.)

This is really a strange kind of independence. Meer Mobaruck, or his heir and representative, existed and had existed since 1839, like the other princes of Upper Sinde, by virtue of abstaining from opposition to the British Government; only the exact degree of severity to be inflicted on him for his former opposition had never been positively and finally settled. The British Government had uniformly regarded him as standing in a worse, not better, position than the other Ameers; as a debtor as well as a subject; and accordingly we find that in 1840 and 1841 the British Political Agents were more than once proposing to their Government to put an end to the excuses and evasions of payment by attaching portions of the lands of this independent prince; a course which Lord Auckland, with very proper forbearance, declined to sanction; among other reasons, because the proportion in which Meer Mobaruck's wealth was divided among his sons, and the consequent ability to pay of his principal heir, was not exactly known. To say that the Indian Government were "*unable* to do more than threaten him with an attack from Shah Soojah," is an assertion which refutes itself. It is really absurd to maintain, that because Meer Mobaruck had

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* "Found" implies a fallacy. Sir A. Burnes had undoubtedly *found* his father independent; the question is how Sir A. Burnes *left* his father.

entreated the same terms as were granted to the other Khyrpore Ameers, and had been refused them; because severer terms had been thought more appropriate to his case; and because, consequently, the Government of India, though forbearing to force the claim to a final settlement, had been regarding him and his heir since 1839, not only as, like the other Khyrpore Ameers, dependent, but as, unlike them, tributary; therefore Lord Ellenborough, in 1842, was bound to regard Meer Nusseer of Khyrpore as completely independent of the Government to which his more friendly relatives were, on more favourable terms, confessedly subservient; to treat him as completely at liberty to engage to any extent in the hostile intrigues, which would have been punishable in them, without the British Government's having a right to charge him with offending against the existing relations between itself and him.

Having, however, thus established the political right of this Ameer to take with impunity whatever steps he might think right as against the English, the Reviewer proceeds to aggravate the case of injustice against the Indian Government, by asserting that Meer Nusseer Khan of Khyrpore had committed no offence, even had he been ever so dependent, at all of a character to call for a penalty; and quotes, in support of his assertion, from the Blue Book the only individual offence recorded against him in the "return of complaints," at page 370, against the Ameers of Khyrpore. It is this:—"Syud Bahadoor Ali, agent of Meer Nusseer Khan at Khyrpore, placing in the stocks and otherwise maltreating the servant of a British officer, and no punishment inflicted on the offender by the Ameer, his master."

Having stated and commented on this case, the Reviewer, in speaking of the Governor-general, slightly misquotes a declaration of his, to the effect that Meer Nusseer is, "as the Governor-general is informed, in the position of an enemy," and then assures his "readers, however incredible it may appear, that this is the whole of the case

against this Ameer, and that he has suppressed nothing." This is the *literal* truth. It *is* the only case stated in a short "return of complaints" against the Ameers of Upper Sinde; beyond which, the Reviewer tells us, we need not look; and certainly we need not for his purpose. It occurred on the 28th of September, immediately before the making out the return, which is probably the reason why it was inserted. It was therefore upon this case, the Reviewer would have us believe, that Major Outram founded such statements as the following, dated May 23rd (page 319), "There is, I consider, sufficient to convict Mee Nusseer Khan of Hyderabad, and his namesake of Khyrpore, whenever it may please his Lordship to take notice of their inimical proceedings."

Or the following, dated June 26th, which of itself sufficiently indicates to what extent the Reviewer would be supported by Major Outram in representing Meer Nusseer Khan of Khyrpore as practically independent of the British Government in 1842. "That chief's (Meer Roostum's) hitherto uniform friendliness to the British Government may fairly entitle him to more lenient treatment for his recent infidelity than is due either to Meer Nusseer Khan of Hyderabad . . . . or his namesake of Khyrpore, whose late father's hostility deprived his family of the claim to pecuniary remission and exemption from tribute granted to Meers Roostum Khan and Ali Moorad, *and whose own concern in the late intrigues entitles him to no consideration.*" . . . "Deprivation of this (Sukkur) would be a trifling punishment for his concern in the late intrigues."

And the following (page 368), which occurs in Major Outram's "remarks" on Sir C. Napier's observations.

"10th paragraph. The parties who have most deeply committed themselves are Meers Roostum and *Nusseer Khan of Khyrpore* and Meer Nusseer of Hyderabad."

This last remark, it must be confessed, is made *after* the occurrence of the offence recorded in the return; in-

deed, it is forwarded together with the return, and is written six days after the date of the return; but it has hardly the appearance of being founded exclusively on the return. Indeed, the heinous and single offence does not appear to have added much to the strength of Major Outram's expressions respecting Nusseer Khan of Khyrpore's hostility.

Mere exaggerative mis-statements of the amount of the penalties inflicted by the revised treaties on the Ameers, are comparatively, perhaps, unimportant, though calculated to mislead many readers; but coming from a writer quite capable of accuracy, and affecting to observe it in details, they show an animus which it is worth while in one instance to expose. "One-third of the Sinde territories, and one-half of the Sinde shikargahs, and the whole of the Sinde coinage," were, in the Reviewer's rhetorical language, to be delivered to the English.

For "one-third" of the Sinde territories, read, less than a third of the territory of Upper Sinde, which was far inferior to that of Lower Sinde.

For "one-half of the Sinde shikargahs," read, a conditional right to cut wood in the shikargahs within "one hundred yards of the banks of the Indus." If the concession of this right on the part of the Ameers would have sacrificed *a half* of their shikargahs, they have been most unjustly censured for the extent of their preserves, "the vast tracts," of which the average width was at most two hundred yards.

For "the whole of the Sinde coinage," an expression without any meaning at all, but used as conveying a vague idea of very extensive confiscation, it should be the *right* of coinage.

The view respecting the ultimate treachery of the Ameers given in the text is that deduced on the whole from a comparison of all the circumstances as stated in the Blue Book. The opposite view is taken by the Reviewer. An argument on the subject would be endless; one remark,

however, is necessary. The alleged treachery of the Ameers (consisting mainly in their protestations that they could not restrain the Beloochees from the hostilities of which they were themselves the instigators, and for which they had been and were making deliberate preparations,) may, perhaps, be capable of disproof; but it is not disproved by the undoubted fact that they warned Major Outram of his danger; assured him that their people were beyond their control, and attempted to make him leave the capital. That they, or some of them, were anxious to save Major Outram personally there cannot be a question; and there is no reason for denying to their conduct in this respect the credit of having been dictated by really good feelings as well as by obvious policy. But this does not settle the question of the imputed treachery.

With respect, however, to some of the grounds brought forward in the Blue Book for accusing the Ameers of treachery, the Reviewer makes the following statement. "They" (*i. e.*, Lord Ellenborough and Sir C. Napier,) "persist in the charge of treachery, and they support it —how? By evidence collected months after the event, *from certain obscure native followers* of the Ameers, who have not objected to do the British Government, now ascendant in Sinde, a paltry favour at the expense of their old masters! We have read these depositions, signed by the British commissioners, and British magistrate and collector of Hyderabad, with unqualified disgust."

The depositions to which the Reviewer alludes will be found at the end of the Supplementary Papers, No. 178, 182; they consist of the reports of two separate conversations. One of them (178) is headed, "Evidence given by Peer Budroodeen," confidential servant of one of the Ameers. There seems no reason to discredit his evidence, of which, though most points are against the Ameers, some are for them; but he may, perhaps, be called with truth an obscure native follower. The other is a memorandum of a conversation between Lieutenant Rathborne on the one

side, and Meer Gholam Shah, Meer Fuzzil Ali, and Meer Bijjur, on the other side. Who are these men? "The Meers Gholam Shah and Fuzzil Ali are nephews of the ex-Ameer Meer Mahomed, their mother having been his sister; and Meer Bijjur is brother-in-law of the ex-Ameer Shahdad, his sister being Meer Shahdad's wife." These men may have, or may not have been trustworthy; but there is one thing which they evidently are not,—"*obscure* native followers." Their evidence, like that of Peer Budroodeen, is in some points in favour of the Ameers, in others against them; it goes to prove that Meer Nusseer of Hyderabad ordered the attack on the Residency; (this, however, as they distinctly state, is not of their own personal knowledge,) that Meer Shahdad of Hyderabad headed it, and that Meer Mahomed remonstrated strongly against it. Any inference from the style of a conversation is of course hazardous; but as far as one can judge, the tone of the evidence of these chiefs is that of truth and candour. If they are liars, they are better dissemblers than their relations and former masters; so much so, that far from exciting "unqualified disgust," this conversation is calculated to give to all who read it a very favourable impression of the demeanour and character of Beloochee chieftains; more calculated by far to awaken sympathy in their behalf than anything that has been said by the Reviewer.

The Reviewer closes his narrative of the events which terminated in the annexation of Sinde to the British dominions with a note respecting the fate of the Ameer Shere Mahomed of Meerpore; it is as follows:—

"The Ameer Shere Mahomed of Meerpore was overlooked at the time of the imposition of the revised treaty, but he did not on that account escape. His history is shortly this:—that he stands charged, in the Return of Complaints, with having allowed his tribute to fall in arrear; that he remained neuter till after the battle of Meeanee, when he sent to know what terms he might

expect; 'that he was ordered to disperse his troops: that he delayed to do so, was threatened by Sir Charles Napier, and finally referred to the same terms as those granted his brother chiefs (they were all prisoners of war); that seeing there was no hope from submission, he preferred the alternative of arms, and was the leader in that second desperate and, for the Beloochees, unsuccessful action, which took place close to Hyderabad; and that he is at this moment a wanderer among the mountains, without house or home.'"

The part of this statement marked with single inverted commas is apparently quoted by the Reviewer from some one; but as he adopts it, it must be considered as his own misrepresentation—indeed, more than misrepresentation—of the case, as shown in the Blue Book. It distinctly imputes Shere Mahomed's present state to Sir Charles Napier's unjust harshness; it implies that the Ameer, though overlooked in the revised treaty, had reason to expect injury; that nevertheless he stood neutral; that, on sending to know what terms he might expect, he was required to disperse his troops, without mention of any terms, except "*finally* . . . those granted his brother chiefs."

Now for the facts. On February 11th, Sir Charles Napier addressed a letter to Meer Shere Mahomed of Meerpore, apparently in answer to some inquiry from that chief, which is not given. The letter is as follows:—"No hostility has to my knowledge been committed by you. There is no mention of your name in the treaty, *nor is there any intention of dispossessing you of any of your land, or doing anything displeasing to you.* The British Government makes war on its enemies, but not on its friends. With regard to the tribute, be so good as to make it over to Mr. Brown, who is now at Hyderabad. I hope you will not allow any of the Ameers of Khyrpore to have any troops within your territories*." It is obvious that the

* *Supplementary Correspondence*, page 33.

tone of this letter is decidedly and intentionally friendly. But the Ameer Shere Mahomed of Meerpore, like a brave Beloochee as he was, collected 10,000 men to fight on the side of their countrymen. With these he was in full march for Meeanee. He had already, Sir Charles Napier states*, arrived within six miles of the field, when he heard that the great battle was lost, which had he been present would probably have been won. (This is what the Reviewer calls *neutrality*). He retraced his steps, and sent to Sir Charles Napier a letter, of which the General was induced by Major Outram's generous advice, to *assume* the truth. The letter is not given, but its tendency may be inferred from the General's answer, which the Reviewer may see (if he has not already seen it,) at p. 47 of the *Supplementary Correspondence.*

Sir C. Napier to Meer Shere Mahomed.

"*February* 18, 1843.

"Syud Imambree, your deputy, came to me with a message from you, that your Highness is the friend of the British, and you did not march with your army beyond your own territory in this fight; therefore I approve of your Highness' message. And now it is necessary that you should disperse your troops you have with you, and so keep no one with you (in the shape of any army); and if I find that your Highness has any collected, I shall attack them. *If you disperse your troops and keep no one with you, I shall reckon you just the same as before,—friend and ally of the British.*"

This is holding out *no hopes from submission!* A fortnight after this, (March 3rd,) on finding that Shere Mahomed had no intention of making submission, but was rallying the Beloochees, Sir C. Napier writes to threaten him with punishment†, *unless* "he would come to his camp,

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* *Supplementary Correspondence*, p. 92.

† Page 48.

to prove his innocence." Ten days later, (March 13th,) Shere Mahomed had 20,000 (said to be 30,000) men round him. It must have been at or about this time (the date is not mentioned,) that he sent to Sir C. Napier a letter, to which the General thus afterwards refers:—"You sent a most insolent letter to me by vakeels. You offered that if I would capitulate, you would let me quit the country. I gave your vakeels the only answer such a letter deserved, namely, that I would answer you with my cannon." "Finally" it was, that (on the 19th March,) as an open and most dangerous enemy, he was "referred" to the same terms as those granted to the other Ameers; that is, to surrender as a prisoner of war. Like a brave man he refused; he fought the battle bravely, and escaped from it; a result for which, we may be sure, Sir Charles Napier was not sorry. That a brave chief should now be "a wanderer among the mountains, without house or home," merely because the English chose to connect themselves with Sinde,—this is a subject of painful regret, but not a befitting groundwork for unjust accusations.

Finally, it is necessary to notice the most serious charge brought by the Reviewer against Sir C. Napier. It is very like one of the most serious charges which can be brought against any man; the charge of denying a fact known by him to be true. "It wears," in the Reviewer's statement, and in his phrase, "a rather dark aspect." Let us look at the "dark aspect" first, and then try whether some light cannot be thrown upon both the darkness and its originator.

"What was the reason assigned by Sir Charles Napier for refusing to re-open the question of the Turban, when grounds, apparently so sufficient, were brought forward by the Ameers, and by Meer Roostum in person, for his doing so? His words are as follows:—

'Roostum's plea of being sent to Ali Moorad by me is a shallow affair. * * * * I will not let his cunning attempt to cast his conduct upon my advice, pass. He went contrary to my advice, and now

wants to make out that he acted by it. I send you a copy of my letter; a return to the Turban is, I think, out of the question, &c.,' (*Supplementary Papers*, page 32.)

"The same thing is urged in a paper of explanations sent to the Governor-general some months subsequently:—

'By my advice to Meer Roostum' (which, let the reader observe, was not given till it was asked,) 'I secured to him the powerful protection of the British Government. *This he did not choose to accept; he went to his brother.*' (*Supplementary Papers*, page 114.)

"Now the original document, a copy of which was sent to Major Outram with the letter first quoted, is couched in the following terms:—

"*Sir C. Napier to Meer Roostum.*

"HIGHNESS. My own belief is that, personally, you have ever been the friend of the English; but you are helpless among your ill-judging family. I send this by your brother his Highness Ali Moorad; *listen to his advice;* TRUST YOURSELF TO HIS CARE; *you are too old for war, and if battle begin, how can I protect you?* If you go to your brother, you may either remain with him or I will send an escort for you to bring you to my camp, where you will be safe. Follow my advice; it is that of a friend. Why should I be your enemy? If I was, why should I take this trouble to save you? I think you will believe me; but do as you please.'

"To complete the confusion we find (at page 6 of the *Supplementary Papers*) the following proclamation by Sir Charles Napier.

'*Camp, near Khyrpore, January* 1, 1843.

'AMEERS, and PEOPLE of SINDE. His Highness the Ameer Roostum Khan sent a secret messenger to me, to say that he was in the hands of his family, and could not act as his feelings of friendship for the English nation prompted him to do, and that if I would receive him, he would escape and come into my camp. I answered his Highness that I would certainly receive him; but that my advice was for him to consult with his brother the Ameer Ali Moorad Khan. He took my advice. *He went to the fort of Dejee to his brother. When I heard this I was glad.*'

"The difficulty is not to be disguised . . . . ." (*Edinburgh Review*, p. 526.)

True. The difficulty, indeed, is not to be disguised, nor

is the meaning of the Reviewer's cautious word, *difficulty*, to be disguised; but there is one thing, which is disguised by the quotations made by the Reviewer, and that is—the truth. It is a disguise, however, easily removed.

In the first place, no one can fail to make the obvious remark, that as Sir C. Napier actually transmits along with these statements a copy of the letter which, and which alone, supplies the means of contradicting him, there is some difficulty in reconciling with his conduct the deliberate intention to mislead, which the Reviewer deduces from his words. It is very clear that whatever else Sir C. Napier may be, he is not a fool. One looks, therefore, upon the contrast as on a puzzle, of which there must be some explanation somewhere, though it is difficult to anticipate its nature. At last, one turns from the Review to the original, and there the explanation is found. Those asterisks have done it all. The passage, (page 32) in its unmangled state, stands thus:—

"Roostum's plea of being sent to Ali Moorad by me is a shallow affair; *because, in the first place*, he sent a secret message (by Moyadeen, I believe Brown told me,) to say he was to all intents a prisoner in Khyrpore, and that he had tried to send away his family, and was obliged to bring them back, after they were on their road, and that he would escape and come to my camp. Brown knows all this matter. The messenger said he (Roostum) would do whatever I advised. My answer was, 'Take your brother's advice; go to him, and either stay with him, or I will escort you to my camp.' His flying from his brother's camp proves that he was not a prisoner; his not flying to mine proves either his duplicity or his imbecility, —I believe the latter; but imbecility is not a legitimate excuse for rulers. I have only to deal with his acts; he played you the same trick; he even now stands out; he cannot say Ali Moorad still influences him. I believe he did at first, but does not now; and I am half inclined now

to doubt the fact, though I did not do so at first; but as I said the intrigues of these people are *nothing* to me, only I will not let his cunning attempt to cast his conduct upon my advice, pass. He went contrary to my advice, and now wants to make out that he acted by it. I send you a copy of my letter." "Any petition the Ameers like to send to the Supreme Government it will be my duty to forward, and I shall do so with pleasure." "The return to the Turban is, I think, out of the question. I will only agree to it by an order, which I do not believe will be given; however, I will not prevent a petition on that or any other subject."

"*Roostum's plea of being sent to Ali Moorad by me is a shallow affair.*" It is evident from the context that Sir C. Napier intends neither to deny nor to disguise that he advised Roostum to go to Ali Moorad; what he means is, not that Roostum's "plea of being sent to Ali Moorad by me," is false in fact; but that as a plea it is shallow; that the defence of his conduct, founded by Meer Roostum on that fact, is "a shallow affair;" "because," and then he proceeds to give an outline of the facts. "I will not let his attempt to cast his conduct upon my advice, pass;" that is, "I will not allow him to shelter his conduct by the plea, that it was owing to my advice;" having before stated and truly stated, what his advice was.

Sir C. Napier speaks of Meer Roostum's conduct generally—and in particular of what he has just mentioned, of his "flying from his brother's camp and then not flying to mine,"—neither of which steps, certainly, were involved in, or in accordance with Sir C. Napier's advice to him to "take his brother's advice; go to him, and either stay with him, or I will escort you to my camp."

"He *went* contrary to my advice." Although the words, "My answer was, take your brother's advice; *go to him,* and either stay with him, &c.," occur within ten

lines of these words, the Reviewer quotes them in the manner and with the meaning which as separately quoted by him, they of necessity bear: that Roostum *went* to Ali Moorad, contrary to the General's advice. The obvious meaning is, "he followed a course contrary to my advice."

That the words of Sir C. Napier should directly contradict his acts is, to say the least, unlikely; that Sir C. Napier of all men should directly contradict *himself* within few lines is too absurd to be believed. Whether it is possible that any one, carefully reading the whole of this passage, could attribute to the words quoted by the Reviewer, and especially to the word *went*, the meaning which, *as* quoted separately by him, they undoubtedly convey; this is a question, however natural, the answer to which concerns no one, except the Reviewer.

To the words in Sir Charles Napier's letter to Meer Roostum, "You are too old for war, and if battle begin how can I protect you?" the Reviewer seems by italicizing them to assign the meaning: *Do not come to me*, for I cannot protect you; a meaning which enables him to throw upon Sir Charles Napier the onus of another contradiction to his subsequent statement. But again, the Reviewer's interpretation is confuted by the context. What does he make Sir C. Napier say? *Do not come to me*, for I cannot protect you, but *go* to your brother, and either stay with him, "or I will *escort you to my camp*, WHERE YOU WILL BE SAFE." Do not come here, where you will not be safe: but either go elsewhere, or come here, *where you will be safe*. Likely nonsense for Sir Charles Napier to write—almost as likely as that he of all Generals should say, "I cannot protect a suppliant in my camp." Did Sir C. Napier mean to say that he could not protect his own standard? his own head quarters? The meaning of Sir Charles, of course, is, "You are, I believe, our friend: but war may arise between us, and you in the hands of your

family: 'you are too old for war;' and how can I protect you if battle between us was once begun?"

The second passage quoted by the Reviewer is, similarly with the first, perverted from its meaning by the omission what precedes it. As it stands, Sir C. Napier seems to assert that he advised Meer Roostum to place himself under his care: that Meer Roostum rejected this advice, and went to his brother, *contrary* to the General's advice. Now, take the passage with the context of the two sentences immediately preceding it, and its whole meaning is modified.

"The proposal of Meer Roostum to come into my camp offered me an easy remedy for this evil; and having adopted the high opinion which Major Outram entertained of Ali Moorad, I had no hesitation *in recommending his brother to seek his protection, and be advised by him:* but I beg the reader to bear in mind, for it is a matter of first-rate importance, and one upon which the whole gist of the matter depends, that while *advising* Meer Roostum to be guided by his brother, yet having suspicions, in despite of the high character given to me by Major Outram of that brother, that some intrigue must be going on, I gave Meer Roostum *the option and invitation* of coming to my camp and putting himself under my protection. I repeat the word 'must,' because it is utterly impossible for me to believe that any Eastern Divan can act without intrigue. By my advice to Meer Roostum, which let the reader observe was not given till it was asked, I secured to Meer Roostum the honourable and powerful protection of the British Government. This he did not choose to accept: he went to his brother, and then *he fled from his brother with his usual vacillating imbecility,* &c."

Compare this whole statement with the letter to Meer Roostum, and they will not be found to differ. Compare with the letter the two last sentences as quoted by the Reviewer, and the apparent contradiction is—what he

wishes it to be. I *advised* him, says Sir Charles Napier, to go to his brother; but I gave him *the option* of coming into my camp: "this he did not choose to accept;" that is, he did not avail himself of the option—he first took the other course; "and then he fled from his brother;" this, from whatever cause proceeding, *was contrary* to Sir C. Napier's advice, which directed Meer Roostum either to stay with his brother; "*or I will* send an escort for you to bring you to my camp, where you will be safe." This was the whole purport of Sir C. Napier's advice: Roostum went to his brother, and so far followed it: he neither remained with his brother nor came to the British camp; and therein he did not follow it. Sir C. Napier may have been—he was—wrong in refusing to reopen the question of the Turban; he may have been wrong in attributing duplicity to Roostum; Roostum's conduct may have been, in truth, the *consequence* of his advice: to maintain this, is very different from insinuating, and attempting to show, by garbled extracts, that Sir Charles Napier ever *denied* having given the advice which he undoubtedly gave; and this is what the Reviewer has, without directly asserting, most distinctly attributed to him. It might perhaps have been better to have left such a charge by an anonymous writer against such a man, to be answered by the old appeal, "UTRI CREDITIS, QUIRITES?"

I have noticed the Reviewer's opinion on the conquest of Sinde solely because of the "distortion of facts" by which, to use a phrase which he has not scrupled to apply to Sir Charles Napier, he has in part supported it. Hardly any view can be taken of our connection with Sinde which will not exhibit much to blame, much to grieve over. That the beginning of that connection should have passed almost unnoticed, while the end has been severely censured; this is in accordance with the general tendency of men to stop at the nearest cause; to visit the later agents in a transaction whose result they disapprove, with the

undivided blame of an event for which they are seldom, in truth, so much as half responsible, a natural but unjust tendency, and as such congenial to a partisan. The cause of right will not be advanced by a writer, who, in the professed service of impartial justice, has not scrupled occasionally to make use of means going beyond even the large licence which legal expediency has conceded to advocates, and political practice to faction.

LONDON:
HARRISON AND CO., PRINTERS
ST. MARTIN'S LANE.



Digitized with financial assistance from
Shri Brihad Bhartiya Samaj
on 31 October, 2019